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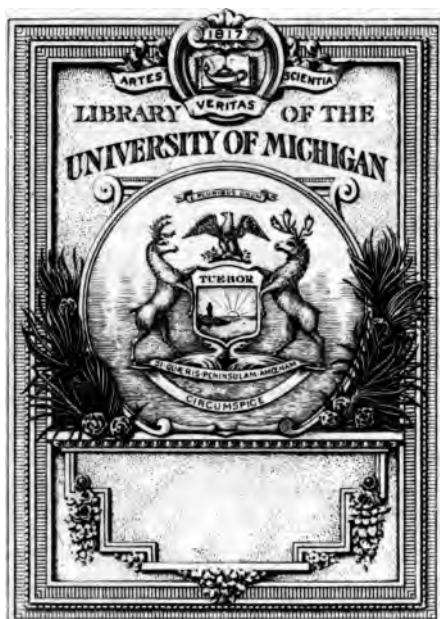
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THE BORDERS  
OF THE  
TAMAR AND THE TAVY.

“I own the power  
Of local sympathy that o'er the fair  
Throws more divine allurements, and o'er all  
The great more grandeur, and my kindling muse,  
Fired by the universal passion, pours  
Haply a partial lay.”

CARRINGTON'S *Dartmoor*.

THE BORDERS  
OF THE  
TAMAR AND THE TAVY;

*THEIR NATURAL HISTORY,*

*Manners, Customs, Superstitions, Scenery, Antiquities,  
Eminent Persons, etc.*

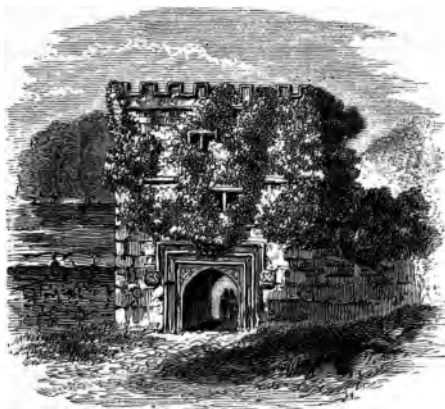
IN A SERIES OF LETTERS TO THE LATE

ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

BY Anna Eliza (Kempe) Stothard

MRS. BRAY,

AUTHOR OF "JOAN OF ARC;" "FITZ OF FITZFORD;" "THE TALBA;" "DE FOIX;"  
"THE LIFE OF STOTHARD, R.A.;" "TRIALS OF THE HEART;" ETC.



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## ILLUSTRATIONS TO VOLUME II.

	PAGE
GATEWAY, FITZFORD . . . . .	<i>Title</i>
STILL-HOUSE . . . . .	I
SCENE ON THE TAVY . . . . .	26
PIXIES' POOL . . . . .	138
LYDFORD CASCADE . . . . .	173
VALLEY OF SHEEPS TOR . . . . .	270
RUSTIC BRIDGE ON THE WALKHAM . . . . .	385
MORWELL ROCKS . . . . .	399
NEW BRIDGE . . . . .	401
THE DEWERSTONE . . . . .	408





STILL-HOUSE.

## LETTER XXVI.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

A Garden—Nature contemplated generally, a subject of constant benefit and delight—By whom sought—Examples cited in ancient and modern Times—A passage from St. Chrysostom—The general character of a Devonshire Cottage—Spenser's lines on the Butterfly—The Vicarage Garden described—The Still-house—Abbey Walls—The Orchard—St. John's—Romanized-British Sepulchral Stones—Blackbird's Nest—Birds—The Storm-Thrush—Swallows—Inscriptions—Betsey Grimbal's Tower—The Long Walk—A Wood Dove that built its nest in the old Tower—Lines upon it—Crowndale the Birthplace of Drake—The old Parish Clerk—Valley of Crowndale—Proposed inscription to Drake—Witchcraft—Tradition respecting Sir Francis Drake and the Fire-ships—Another Legend concerning him—Shooting the Gulf—Tradition of his Wife—Tale of Sir Francis and the Ship-boy—Extract from a Letter of Mr. Southey.

*Vicarage, Tavistock, September 7th, 1832.*

I HAVE often observed in life that the most happy and contented minds, the most amiable and gentle dispositions, have been found in persons who take

peculiar delight in a garden, or in contemplating on a larger scale the boundless beauties and wonders of creation.

How instructive, for example, is it in all seasons to consider the progress of the vegetable and the animal world! Winter, that season of inactivity and barrenness to the eye, we find teeming with the hidden operations of Nature; for then the snows, which cover the face of the earth with their chilling aspect, are in fact like that which clothes the flocks, a mantle affording a covering to the plants as they nestle beneath it: and the bare and leafless tree abounds with vitality. And how admirable is that wisdom which guards its works against the dangerous transition of passing from one extreme in the seasons to the other! The fluctuating spring, which not too suddenly makes us forget the winter, yet prepares the earth by milder warmth for the summer's ardent suns; and the fall of the year, when the harvest is complete, that leads us like the decline of life by gentle steps to the winter, and enables us to meet its attendant severities of storms and biting frosts, are all instances of the merciful order and government of Providence.

There is a beautiful passage in St. Chrysostom which is so in harmony with this subject, that I cannot forbear to quote it: "As the water which descends from Heaven nourishes and vivifies, and though it be of *one* kind, operates in various ways; is snow-white in the lily, but sable in the narcissus, blushes in the rose, is purple in the violet, is sweet in the fig, but bitter in the wormwood: so also the Divine Spirit, which descends from Heaven, nourishes and vivifies the soul, and though of one kind, exerts its power and efficacy in various ways."

I have ventured to give these remarks as introductory to a very favourite subject of mine—the many benefits that result to us from cultivating a taste not only for Nature at large, but for a garden. A taste for gardening is more marked in the English, perhaps, than in any other nation. We see it not merely in the educated and higher classes, but with the poorest of the peasantry. How many a cottage, whose want even of the most ordinary conveniences of life bespeaks the needy condition of its inmate, possesses a character of cheerfulness and comfort by the woodbine that twines round the ruinous porch, the rose-bush that creeps in upon the lattice, or the stately holly-hock and the gorgeous sun-flower that deck the slip of ground before the door—flowers which, like noble persons in their progress through the world, plant them wherever it may be, near the palace or the cottage, lose nothing of the dignity inherent in their nature, and rather give it to their station than derive it thence.

I know not any county in England where this taste for a garden with the peasantry is more universal than in the West. A Devonshire cottage, if not too modern, is the sweetest object that the poet, the artist, or the lover of the romantic could desire to see. The walls, generally of stone, are grey, and if not whitewashed (which they too often are), abound with lichen, stone-crop, or moss. Many of these dwellings are ancient, principally of the Tudor age, with the square-headed mullioned and labelled windows. The roof is always of thatch, and no cottage but has its ivy, its jessamine, or its rose, mantling its sides and creeping on its top. A bird-cage at the door is often the delight of the children; and the little garden,

besides its complement of hollyhocks, has a bed or two of flowers before the house of the most brilliant colours. A bee-hive, and the elder, that most useful of all domestic trees, are seen near the entrance; and more than once have I stopped to observe the eagerness and the delight with which the children amuse themselves in chasing a butterfly from flower to flower. A butterfly is the favourite of infancy, and affords a subject for reflection even to age. The change it undergoes would puzzle a philosopher did he attempt to explain the laws of its ephemeral being; and wherefore a supine and ugly grub, that lies in darkness, should change into a creature with vibrating wings, ever restless, ever sporting in light and sun, and whose brief existence seems to realize the notions of Epicurus, in being devoted to pleasure. Who has ever described a butterfly like our Spenser, in those lines of matchless beauty?

“The velvet nap which on his wings doth lie,  
The silken downe with which his backe is dight,  
His broad outstretched hornes, his hayrie thies,  
His glorious colours and his glistering eies.”

Those who delight in sacred studies can never forget that a garden was the first possession bestowed on man whilst he was in a state of innocence. There, by the forfeiture of his obedience, he became subject to mortality. And in a garden too stood the sepulchre whence came his assurance, by the resurrection of our Lord, of his immortality. Even the heathen world of antiquity affords us examples of how many great and wise men delighted in the culture of a particular spot of earth. The admirable Numa left with reluctance his garden and his retirement at Cures (where, says Plutarch, he gave his hours to the

worship of the gods, to his friends, dressing the ground, and feeding cattle), to become the king of Rome. Cincinnatus was taken from the plough to be a Dictator. "And the sublime imagination of Plato," says an eloquent modern writer,<sup>1</sup> "still required him to seek God amidst the pleasant haunts of a garden." It is recorded of Socrates that he delighted in the beauties of the country, where, in a garden, he enjoyed sitting under the plane-tree, on the margin of a pure stream, to breathe the evening air. In ages of a more recent date, we have numerous examples of the best men, who found in a garden a relaxation from the toils, and a solace for the cares of life. René, the afflicted and noble Count of Anjou, felt a melancholy pleasure in showing to his friends the flowers he had reared with his own hands. Fenelon, in such a spot, would pursue his walks of contemplation 'in peace and silence before God.' In our own country how many good men have evinced the same taste! How many great poets and writers have, like the bees around them, culled from the garden the choicest sweets, and stored them as the flowers of song! The poem by Mason, on such a subject, can never be forgotten; for he was one

"Of those the favoured few, whom Heaven has lent  
The power to seize, select, and reunite  
Her loveliest features; and of these to form  
One archetype complete of sovereign grace."<sup>2</sup>

Cowley addressed a poem to Evelyn on the delight he took in his garden; and Evelyn was the first Englishman who brought its culture into a regular art; leaving his work on forest trees as an invaluable

<sup>1</sup> Kenelm Digby, author of the *Broad Stone of Honour*.

<sup>2</sup> MASON'S *Garden*. Book i.



legacy to posterity. Lord Bacon's fondness for horticulture is well known ; and Shenstone's garden at the Leasowes was as celebrated as himself who formed it. And what a picture of beauty has Milton given in his description

“Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,  
Now nearer, crowns with her inclosure green,  
As with a rural mound, the champaign head  
Of a steep wilderness ; whose hairy sides  
With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,  
Access denied : and overhead upgrew  
Insuperable height of loftiest shade,  
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,  
A sylvan scene ! and as the ranks ascend  
Shade above shade, a woody theatre  
Of stateliest view.”

To speak of a less lofty theme than that of Milton's Eden ; a garden, such as we generally find in the country, is a world in miniature, and one that we may call our own. Its extent is not too large to prevent our becoming acquainted with every capability of our domain. We may here form our colonies of plants and flowers, and see them rise and grow and thrive, like so many subjects obedient to our will ; we may cherish or neglect them, and as we do the one or the other they will flourish or decline, whilst they are liable to no injuries but such as arise from causes beyond our control—the inclemency of the seasons, the winds, the blight, and the storm. It is not always necessary, though doubtless it enhances the pleasure, to be really a good gardener, in order to enjoy a garden. This I can truly say ; for though I am not skilled in the horticultural art, yet I am not insensible to its value, and delight in our own spot of ground. At all seasons I find it replete with en-

tainment and variety; and truly is it a pretty picturesque appendage to the Vicarage-house, which stands in the midst; and my pleasure is enhanced by knowing that the garden was, in its present state, entirely planned, laid out, and planted by Mr. Bray, in a way to show to most advantage such ruins of the Abbey as it contains, and to make a piece of ground of moderate size appear, by an ingenious exercise of art, a great deal larger than it is.

Another peculiarity is attached to it—it is not merely a summer-garden; since by planting a number of evergreens near the house, we have all the year round the satisfaction of looking upon verdure. These evergreens consist principally of laurels, bays, and hollies—the common and variegated—which, from the humidity and mildness of the climate, and the luxuriant way in which all vegetation grows in this neighbourhood, are now become not merely fine shrubs, but large and spreading trees. We have also the beautiful Portugal laurel, the cypress, the juniper, and a most noble cedar of Lebanon; besides the Spanish chestnut, the common English horse chestnut, the sycamore, and the finest acacias.

The Spanish chestnut produces fine fruit, which we store for Christmas. At a particular time, when the tree is in blossom, the smell it emits is most disagreeable, something like that of rotten wood. If such is the case in Spain, where there are whole forests of these chestnuts, they must I should think be very unwholesome to all who live near, or travel through them.

Of ivy we have perhaps a little too much. Ours is the giant ivy, as it is called; it grows so fast that, without continual cutting and clearing, it intrudes

more than it ought to do upon the architectural remains of the Abbey, particularly the Still-house, and Betsy Grimbal's Tower, the two most distinguished ruins in our little domain ; yet not so fine in themselves as the noble portion of the Abbey walls, with their battlemented parapet, that once formed the boundary of the abbot's, and now of the vicar's private gardens.

At no season of the year are these gardens other than beautiful. In the winter, when, now and then they are covered with snow, the majestic cedar of Lebanon, which I can see from the windows where I am writing this letter, assumes the most elegant appearance : it looks light and feathery, and its branches wave, if there is the least wind, like a panache of white plumes on the helmet of a chivalrous knight equipped for the tourney. And the old towers, with their heads buried in snow, whilst the lower parts sheltered by the incumbent ivy still show their dusky sides, remind one of the old monks with a white cowl upon their heads. But I ought to take you more regularly through our garden ; a very fit place for a poet, and especially for one who has sung of other lands as well as of our own ; for here the laurels of Portugal and of England will literally wave above his brow.

The Athenians had a notion that the Muses would be gratified by having a temple dedicated to them on the banks of the river Ilissus ; and so, according to the idea of Digby, the founders of the abbeys seemed to think that the saints to whom they dedicated them would be delighted by having all such edifices stationed on the banks of a river. Buckland, as well as Tavistock Abbey, stood amidst embowering woods

on the margin of the beautiful Tavy; and though in our immediate neighbourhood the antique oaks, that in all probability saw the rise and progress of these monastic buildings, have long been swept away; yet we are not without wooded hills. For example that called St. John's, where the hermitage once stood, is situated opposite to our garden on the other side of the river. It is a romantic spot, where stands a rock that still rears his head like the tower of an old fortress, and looks down upon the Tavy, and upon the Abbey's mouldering walls, with the same solemn front with which it beheld them when they were stormed by the Danes, or desecrated by the Reformationists. A wilderness of briars and brambles and old trees surround it; but there is a winding path that runs past its base and affords a very pleasing view of the town, the Abbey Bridge, &c., with the advantages derived from a rugged and picturesque foreground. We look directly upon St. John's; and the French windows of my favourite room, where I love to sit and read and write, open into our garden. A lawn faces them, bordered with evergreens of such luxuriant growth that I call them my *grove*, and there is no extravagance in the expression.<sup>3</sup>

To the west, and not more than seven or eight feet distant from one of the windows, stands, on the skirts of the lawn, one of those British, Romanized sepulchral stones, which Mr. Bray discovered and preserved; a particular account of which has been given by himself. This stone is of granite, and stands upright about eight feet above the earth. Against the back part of it some ivy was planted, which is now so thick and spreading that it has

<sup>3</sup> Since this was written, several of these trees have been cut down.

assumed at the top an appearance somewhat resembling a judge's wig ; this, which somewhat overshadows the inscription, would have been cleared away, but for the circumstance I am about to relate.

During the spring of the present year, I observed that between the hours of four and five in the afternoon, with the most exact regularity, as if ruled by a clock, several fine blackbirds assembled together on our lawn, amusing themselves with singing, chirping, and picking up worms. We took especial care not to disturb them, and at last they grew so bold, that they would sometimes hop and flutter even upon the gravel walk that runs close to the windows. At length we observed that a pair of them constantly returned to the judge's wig, where we soon found they had formed a nest in the ivy ; and were bringing up a little family of vocalists to complete the numerous band of that description which have literally converted our garden into an aviary. I need not add we get no fruit. The blackbird is one of the shyest birds in existence ; and I am assured by the Rev. Mr. Johnes (the White of our neighbourhood) that a nest built by one of the race within a few feet of a parlour window, is a remarkable fact in natural history : here, therefore, I record it. We are indeed exceedingly musical ; for the old walls, the ivy, the number of trees, and not allowing them to be disturbed, is altogether so agreeable and inviting to the feathered tribes, that we have them of all descriptions, and nearly all the year round. Our thrushes are numerous ; and they will sit and sing upon the trees, sometimes in answer to each other, in the most delightful manner. We have also goldfinches, and bullfinches, and green and all other finches that ever

bore the name; and blackbobs, linnets, and martins, and the poor little wren,<sup>4</sup> and robin red-breasts out of number; and such a colony of sparrows have settled themselves in the ivy, that our man John says it grieves his heart to see how they eat up the peas after all his trouble of sowing and sticking. Guns are never allowed in our territory; and scarecrows are of no use with birds so gently treated. But one enemy they have in spite of all our endeavours to guard them; and that enemy is a certain favourite cat; one of the *smallest*, yet fiercest, and most beautiful of her kind; a very tigress in her nature.

We constantly hear in our garden that little watchman of the tempest, the storm-thrush: for whenever violent wind and rain come together, one or more of these will perch on the very topmost branches of an elm, the loftiest tree we have, and there will sit and pipe, rocking in the gale; and their note will sometimes seem to grow more loud and shrill as the winds blow stronger and higher. Swallows in abundance pay us a passing visit as they make their rapid evolutions in pursuit of the insect tribe; and after having been on the wing from sun-rise to sun-down, we sometimes see them of an evening hanging like bees on the pendent branches of the shrubs above the canal.

In going down the lawn, the Still-house, an old tower where the monks distilled their medicines and sweet waters,<sup>5</sup> becomes the point of attraction; on returning, the Vicarage and the shrubbery are seen in the foreground, backed by the tower of the church.

<sup>4</sup> "The golden-crested wren mentioned by Polwhele is probably the humming bird noticed by Martin, in the environs of Tavistock, who describes it as hanging its nest by a thread to the extreme bough of a tree."—*Monthly Review*.

<sup>5</sup> The Benedictine monasteries had always a school for medicine.

And from no part of the grounds do we view any thing belonging to the town, except a few of the old buildings that keep up the character of antiquity afforded by the massive walls. I must not pass without notice another object, although a modern one, of some curiosity—it is the verandah before the drawing-room windows, which Mr. Bray erected after a design of his own. It now needs repair, as it was injured by the violent storms of a winter or two ago ; but in this verandah, as well as in the external porch of the house, he has proved that the zigzag ornament so often seen in our churches of Gothic or Norman date was suggested by *wood-work*. The frieze is formed in that fashion by small pieces of fir nailed together ; and the rich brown colour of the bark of the wood, as well as the pattern, produces a beautiful effect. The festoons, which hang across the space left open in the verandah before the windows, are composed of pine cones pierced and strung together upon wire, the same as those so much admired which surround the cottage near the sea in the delightful grounds of Mount Edgcumbe. The trellis work is enriched by the honeysuckle, the clematis, the *pyrus japonica*, and a spreading *hydrangea*, whose flowers are of the noblest growth. In no part of England are they, I believe, seen so large and beautiful as in Devonshire.

To the west of the house there is a walking shed, erected by Mr. Bray. It is thatched ; a boundary wall supports the roof ; trees grow in front of it, and the ivy and shrubs render it a cool retreat from the summer's heat or shower. The following inscriptions were written by Mr. Bray for several parts of the garden. The second he cut himself on a slab of Devonshire slate, and placed it on the wall under the

walking shed. The third, similarly cut, is on part of the Abbey walls, where the noblest laurels and hollies form a natural arcade.<sup>6</sup>

INSCRIPTION FOR A SEAT IN THE GARDEN, SUGGESTED BY THE  
NOTE ON GEN. ii. 8, IN MANT'S BIBLE.

The man with heavenly wisdom blest,  
Seeks in a garden peace and rest,  
And there, by worldly evils crossed,  
He finds 'a Paradise unlost.'

INSCRIPTION UNDER THE WALKING SHED.

"From storms a shelter, and from heat a shade,"  
Beneath this shed, my feeble hands have made,  
May I *with God*, like holy *Enoch walk*,  
*As friend to friend*, like Moses, hear him talk!  
And he, who's the true *shadow from the heat*,  
*And shelter from the storm*, shall guide my feet,  
Not only here where first I drew my breath,  
But "wheresoe'er I go, through life or death."

INSCRIPTION ON THE ABBEY WALL, FRONTING THE WEST.

Sacred to Zimmerman and Solitude,  
Nor worldly cares, nor eastern winds, so rude,  
Should hither, could weak man command, intrude.

*To Livingus, Abbot of Tavistock.*<sup>7</sup>

Thou taught'st thy king to chide his flatt'ring slaves,  
By bidding cease to flow the heedless waves.

*To the Same.*<sup>8</sup>

When fled thy spirit from this sacred pile,  
Presageful thunders shook Britannia's isle.

<sup>6</sup> Since this letter was written, and the decease of Mr. Bray, great alterations have been made in the garden and Vicarage House.

<sup>7</sup> Livingus lived in the reign of Canute, and was much beloved by that monarch.

<sup>8</sup> "Just as he was about to expire—*Horrisonus crepitus per totam Angliam auditus, ut ruina et finis totius putaretur orbis.*"—See *Worthies of Devon*.



*To Elfrida.*

Here to thy heart were peace and virtue known ;  
Not when thy beauty graced fond Edgar's throne.

*To Sir Francis Drake.*

By thee, bold chief ! around th' astonish'd world,  
Britannia's sovereign flag was first unfurl'd.

*To Glanville.<sup>9</sup>*

Here to thine eye, illustrious sage !  
Themis unrolled her ample page.

*To the Family of Fitz of Fitzford.<sup>1</sup>*

Ye patriot race ! Fond favourites of renown !  
Yours was the warlike sword, the peaceful gown.

*To Browne.<sup>2</sup>*

Your pastoral lyre the hand of fancy strung,  
In Ina's combe when Walla's love you sung.

## INSCRIPTION FOR THE ABBEY WALL, 'NEAR THE TAVY.

This wall, the Abbey's sacred bound, between,  
Tavy, though not unheard, yet, ah ! unseen,  
Flows on, regardless of my votive lays,  
Or thine, O Browne ! the boast of happier days.  
Yet still I'll string the lyre, still preach the word,  
Or all unheeded, or but idly heard ;  
Content my labours but to *one* be known ;  
He, who's *Himself* the *great reward* alone.

Having before described Betsey Grimbal's Tower, I have here only to mention that it is situated near the entrance to our house, in the quarter towards the town ; but we must still continue our walk to the Still-house of the monks. In doing so we must pass

<sup>9</sup> Glanville was one of the Justices of the Common Pleas. His house, Kilworthy, is situated near Tavistock.

<sup>1</sup> As there is no inscription on the monument in the church, it is uncertain to which of this remarkable family it was erected.

In his *Britannia's Pastorals*, he has introduced the love of Tavy Walla ; a poetical name for Wallabrook, which runs into it.

the winding path which threads the lawn, at the extremity of which, and forming a very picturesque and elegant object, stands what I call *Cleopatra's Needle*. This is nothing more than a stone (already described) about ten feet high, somewhat of the obelisk form, with an inscription which shows it to be a Romanized-British memorial of the dead.<sup>3</sup> Thus you find we have *two* of these most rare monuments of antiquity stationed in our garden. Not far from the obelisk there is an arbour, which was speedily constructed. Mr. Bray removed to that spot from the front of the Abbey House, which it nearly covered, a very fine *tea-tree*, as it is called, by planting it and bringing forward the branches with the support of a light frame work ; so that one and the same day saw the rise and completion of his arbour. The branches thus bent forward afterwards struck root, the same at their tops as at the bottom. The birds are very fond of this bower, and build their nests in and near it. In the arbour there is placed, by way of seat, the capital of a column that in all probability belonged to the Abbey Church. The ornaments which decorated the front are obliterated ; but on one of the sides may still be seen a trefoil emblem of the Trinity, and on the other a cross. By the form of the latter, and the style of the whole, I should think this capital is as old as the time of Livingus, when the Abbey was rebuilt, after being destroyed by the Danes. I ought not to omit stating that so highly

<sup>3</sup> Such memorials are of the highest antiquity. Josephus (Book the 7th) describes one, as a marble stélé, near the holy city of Jerusalem, that was erected as a memorial of himself by Absalom. In scripture it is called 'Absalom's place.' The custom of erecting monuments for eminent persons during their lifetime prevailed also at one period in the middle ages, as we read in Froissart.

did the late Mr. Repton, the celebrated landscape gardener, estimate Mr. Bray's taste in the art, that he more than once consulted him ; and used good-humouredly to say, that if all other trades failed Mr. Bray might succeed him in his profession.

Beyond the obelisk is a little bridge, built of stone, that crosses the Tavistock canal, on the opposite bank of which arises my favourite tree, so often named, the noble cedar. The bridge leads to the *second* division of the garden, bounded on the left by a lateral wall that belonged to the Abbey, and joining the Still-house, which also unites with the massive and lengthened boundary walls of the grounds towards the river. *This* is a very interesting spot. A walk, shaded with trees, (so that it literally forms an avenue of a sombre character, quite in harmony with monastic buildings) runs about three hundred yards, close under this portion of the Abbey walls, in a direct line from the Still-house.<sup>4</sup> A door in the first-mentioned *lateral* wall opens into what is now our kitchen-garden, and there we can walk under the lofty and battlemented portion of the ancient walls next the river. The ramparts, from which you look through the battlements upon the Tavy beneath, are still entire. From this spot you also command a good view of some of the remains of the monastic edifices that exist in the town.

Returning to the second garden, we come out close to the Still-house. In this tower there are an upper and an under apartment, now in a very ruinous state ; but the former, a few years ago, before the decaying roof for want of repair partially fell in, afforded a very snug upper room, which would have made a

<sup>4</sup> Since this was written all these trees have been cut down.

good study for Friar Bacon ; and which likewise reminds me of Buffon's study in the tower of his garden at Montbard, in Burgundy, where that great naturalist and most eloquent writer patiently toiled at those works which are now held in honour by all the nations of Europe. In the little room above noticed there are three windows, one trefoiled, the others round headed, that look out on the Tavy, which runs at the base of the public Walk, foaming over rocks below. The Still-house is overgrown with ivy, and so much does this hide the architecture of the buildings and the windows, that Mr. Bray is about to have it partially cleared away ; this he has hitherto done once every two or three years. Some time ago a wood-dove took up her abode in the ivy that grows thus luxuriantly about the old tower. I was fond of seeing the bird fly to and from her nest ; and I believe I may say that I saved its life, by requesting our neighbour and cousin, Mr. John Bray, to forbear firing at it. But the bird did not know her true friend, for it fled from me as I approached the spot that gave her shelter—a circumstance which suggested to me, though a very humble votary of the muses, a few lines which Mr. Bray wishes me to send you in this letter, as he is pleased to say they belong to the history of our garden ; and as I know you to be one of those indulgent poets who look with a kindly feeling on the little productions of others, I will, without further apology, here venture to give you my lines:—

## TO THE WOOD-DOVE.

Oh ! fly not away, silly dove, from thy nest ;  
No footstep is mine to intrude :  
Return to thine ivy-built covert of rest,  
And cherish thy soft-feathered brood.

But here, pretty bird, prithee make thee thy bower,  
Thou shalt find it a shelter of love ;  
In this old Abbey wall, near yon grey-mantled tower,  
Where the ivy is nodding above.

Yes—there, when the wind sighs in sad fitful moans,  
While Tavy rolls dark through the dell,  
Fast foaming along o'er the flood-beaten stones,  
Thou shalt nestle secure in thy cell.

Or when at grey eve, or the still summer night,  
Whilst the clouds in soft livery shine,  
Oh, then, pretty wood-dove, bend hither thy flight,  
And the care to protect thee be mine.

Here no fowler shall harm thee, no harsh sounds intrude,  
Thou shalt list to the notes of thy mate ;  
Thou shalt hear but the chirps of thy young, tender brood,  
So blest in their innocent state.

Still thou wander'st abroad on thy light silvered wings  
From her who would shelter thy nest ;  
Oh ! turn thee again, ere thine own folly brings  
A wound to that beautiful breast.

Ah ! how oft shun we those, foolish dove, like thy flight,  
To whose precepts we soonest should bend :  
For the smiles of the world, for its follies so light,  
We leave the warm heart of a friend.

I have but one spot more to notice in our garden,  
and that is one I never can approach without feelings  
of the tenderest regret. It is the spot where my  
beloved mother planted a laurestine, as a memorial,  
before she quitted the Vicarage to return to her own  
home. I often look on that tree, and remember that  
the hand which planted it had sustained me in infancy,  
guided my youth, nursed me in sickness and in sorrow,  
and never throughout life met mine but with the most  
devoted kindness and affection.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The beloved mother here mentioned, Mrs. Anne Kempe, died in  
March, 1835.

Well may the love of a child to a parent be called filial *piety*, as distinguishing, as raising it above all other earthly duties or affections; for surely if there is to be seen in this world an image of God's watchfulness over the creatures he has formed, it is to be found in the tenderness of a dear mother. Death cannot conquer her affection; it but sanctifies it; and she has a cherished hope that will blunt his most bitter pang—to meet her child beyond the grave. A parent's love too does not desert even the guilty; it outlives shame; for it will wait, like God himself, and hope for penitence, and run to meet it, and rejoice over the lost that is found, more than over the just who need no forgiveness.

The postern in the Abbey walls that opens on the Walk, is the nearest way from our house to that quiet and beautiful valley, Crowndale; and as I intend to conclude my letter with some account of it, I take the present opportunity of mentioning that, in my solitary rambles to this favourite spot, I have not unfrequently met a remarkable character of this place, who seems as fond of the banks of the Tavy, in the direction towards Crowndale, as I am myself. And if you will but let me so far indulge my fancy as to say I will now take you thither, whilst we pass on I will endeavour to make you, in some measure, acquainted with this good old man, who, with his fishing-rod in hand, may be often found throwing a line into the river, the favourite amusement of his walks.

This worthy person, though born in humble life, and possessing no advantages of education beyond those of reading and writing, may truly be called a Christian philosopher; for if to possess the soul in

content and peace, to walk honestly before God, and to receive his word with the simplicity and docility of a little child, constitute the essentials of true wisdom, he of whom I speak deserves the title as much as if he had studied in the schools. I know you delight in the 'short and simple annals of the poor;' such you wished me to collect—and wherever I can find any that have the interest which religion and morality never fail to give them, they shall not want a record, as far as I have the power to bestow it; for no more in writing than in society would I wish to see that 'Dives and Lazarus gulf,' between the poor and the better classes, which shows nothing so much, in those who form it, as a hard heart and an arrogant mind. I have often thought, that though in the biography of the rich we may learn the lessons of this world, we, generally speaking, should be more likely to mark the way to a better in the annals of those amongst the poor who are, as Bossuet says, "Souls hidden to the eyes of men, and chiefly hidden to their own eyes, but who know God, and who are known of him."

The good man of whom I speak bears no higher station than that of clerk in our parish church. He is more than seventy years old, and still performs the duties of his office with cheerfulness and regularity. He is a most single-hearted being, kind to every one; and with a privilege to which his years and his worth fully entitle him, he will give his word of advice and even of admonition to all, with the same good will and sincerity; nor is he other than charitable in allowing for the infirmities of his neighbours. Mr. Doney, for such is his name, though he has lived here above fifty years, was born at Bovey Tracey in this

county. He considers all the good that has befallen him in this life, and the happy course he has hitherto held through it, under Divine Providence, to be owing to the care and example of his mother: who, though obliged to toil for her daily bread, to bring up her fatherless children in the humblest walks of society, appears by all I can learn to have been a most excellent woman. From the earliest age she taught her little ones the knowledge and fear of God; to be kind and affectionate to each other, truly 'forbearing one another in love:' and so much did our worthy clerk feel his obligations to her, for thus 'training him up in the way he should go,' that when she was on her death-bed he knelt down by her, thanked her for it, and prayed God to give her the reward.

At eleven years old he was put to the now forgotten trade of a stay-maker; but his master dying when he was about eighteen, he went to sea, in the whale fishery, to the coast of Newfoundland. On his return to Tavistock he married; and for many years lived happily with his wife, till she was removed from him by death. He has since taken another, who is still alive. After his first marriage he returned to business and settled in this town; but he soon found that stay-making was fast failing as a trade; and though he had no prospect of any other to which he could turn his hand, yet, to use his own words, he put his trust in God, and waited his time as patiently as he could. The parish clerk died just at this juncture; and the late vicar having observed how constant Mr. Doney had been in his attendance at church for ten years, and hearing that he bore a good character, gave him the appointment so recently become vacant. Mr. Doney, who in all the events of



his life never forgets the 'Great First Cause,' gave the praise for this blessing where it was due; and a joyful day was it for him when he became, though the humblest, a servant in the house of the Lord. Two years after, Mr. Bray became the Vicar of Tavistock; and from that hour to the present he has had the fullest experience of the integrity and the true Christian piety of his worthy clerk, for whom he entertains the highest respect and regard. It is not a little remarkable that Mr. Doney has never been prevented, by illness or any other cause, a single day discharging his duties in the church during all these years. Our friend is *now* of a spare person, and begins to feel the infirmities of time, and to show them in his countenance; yet the expression of cheerfulness and benevolence by which that countenance has always been distinguished, is unchanged, and I doubt not will remain the same to the last, since it is but a reflection of the good man's mind. He has a weak thin voice, though he is quick and ready in all matters of business. In his dress he observes the old fashion of wearing buckles in his shoes; and he has two wigs, one light coloured for week days, the other, somewhat darker, for Sundays. Indeed the wigs of the Tavistock parish clerks have, I understand, always been famous. Mr. Doney's predecessor, in the time of a former vicar, used to inherit the cast-off wigs of his master, from whose new frizzled headpiece they were alone distinguished by being less powdered and pomatumed.

Many books Mr. Doney does not think good; because, he says, they take off our time from the study of the Bible, which, if a man reads all his life long, will be always found new, and he will become

the wiser for it. Jeremy Taylor (or 'worthy Mr. Taylor,' as he calls that good and learned Bishop) is his most favourite author; and so well is he acquainted with the few works he has of that divine, that I verily believe he knows the greater part of them by heart; and he is very fond of referring to them and to scripture always with cheerfulness, and without the least shade of what is termed cant.

Indeed, whenever you enter into conversation with good Mr. Doney, it is sure to lead to some moral or some religious observation; for he never can think that the wisdom, the fear, or the love of God should be separated from anything. The last time I met him in one of my walks to Crowndale, he had his fishing-rod in his hand; and as I learnt we were partly going the same way, we joined company; and on that day, like the melancholy Jaques, (though the word *melancholy* does not very well apply to my friend) I found him 'full of matter.' The morning he told me was not favourable for fishing; which I should not myself have guessed, as the day was sunny and delightful; but he felt as much amusement, I believe, in throwing his line and in catching nothing, as if he had been ever so successful in his sport. While we passed along the beauty of the river, as its limpid waters that seemed to talk to us ran gurgling over the rocks and stones, drew our attention; and the wooded hills and opening valley of Crowndale shone with all the freshness and vivacity of a morning in the spring: I made some slight remark on the country; and he followed it up by an observation that forcibly struck me for its singular coincidence, *even in expression*, with a line in Shakspeare, a poet whose works I cannot fancy he had ever

seen ; for, whilst speaking of the wisdom of God displayed in his creation, Mr. Doney said, "that, for his part, he *could find sermons in the very stones, and Providence in every thing about him!*"

If I were to write down half the good remarks I have heard from our worthy parish clerk, this letter would not soon find an end. Another anecdote, however, I must mention, ere I bid adieu to him. He was here the other day, and assisted me in looking over the oldest register we have, (beginning in 1614) as I wished to ascertain the time of the birth of one of the famous family of Glanville. We chanced to turn over the pages to the entry of the *deaths* in the great plague-year in Tavistock, 1626. The list was a formidable one ; so formidable that Mr. Doney's spirit of religious reflection could not pass it without a comment.

He said, and most justly, how thankful we ought to be that our present register did not show the same melancholy numbers, considering how the cholera had lately raged at Plymouth, and how constant our communication had been with that town. There was but one year that he remembered, since he had been clerk, when the deaths in this parish (which are about one hundred yearly) had extended to any extraordinary amount ; that was when the small-pox raged so terribly amongst the children. He told me the poor mothers were then, like Rachel, weeping for their children, and would not be comforted because they were not ; but he did all he could, in his way, to console them. "For I told them," said Mr. Doney, "that it was Christ's word to suffer little children to come to Him, for of such was the kingdom of heaven ; and that was the best

thing I could think of to say to them; but all comfort comes from above."

I must not forget, too, an instance of Mr. Doney's goodwill, in speaking in defence of a young clergyman in this neighbourhood whom some one censured, in his presence, for going out hunting. He told the censurer "not to judge rash judgment; for Isaac, as good a soul as ever breathed, sent out his son Esau to kill venison for him that he might make a savoury dish, and that in our time there was no harm in it; and allowance must be made for young men, though they were ministers." Our good clerk, in the single-heartedness of his character, his affectionate respect for his 'master,' as he calls Mr. Bray, and his love of the church, reminds me much of the worthy parish clerk so feelingly described by Izaak Walton in his *Life of Hooker*.

In the quiet valley of Crowndale, situated about a mile distant to the south-west of Tavistock, and towards which we have been thus slowly advancing, there are none of those bold and striking features which afford a grand subject for a painter, and a good one for an author. Yet the artist may find in it many a picturesque study, and the fertile fancy may there indulge its reverie of past times with advantage, surrounded as the valley is by objects of a pleasing and pastoral character. Viewed with feelings of this description (and surely few can see the birthplace of Drake without them) the imagination, which has a charm to make even Nature herself obedient to her behests, may here exert its power in a thousand agreeable visions, till, like the azure fields of air when the rainbow spreads its glorious arch amid them, the reposing landscape is seen more beautiful from the varied colouring of a poetic mind.

The river flows past the picturesque arches of West Bridge in a rippling course over its bed of pebbles and stones, in many a wind and bend towards Crowndale, till, suddenly taking a bolder sweep near a place called Brook, it encounters and rushes over several scattered masses of rock, foaming with that impetuosity after rain which gives so animated a character to most streams that, like the Tavy, have their source in mountainous or elevated lands. A pretty cottage



SCENE ON THE TAVY.

at Brook stands close to the water's side, with steps cut in the shelving rock that descend to it from the little garden. Fields and meadows are opposite; and many an old tree, whose roots start from the banks of the river, throws its branches across where shade and sunshine may alternately be found to relieve each other with the most beautiful effects, whilst the tremulous boughs make those dancing shadows that chequer the ground beneath. In the summer months

the foxglove, here so tall and luxuriant, and a vast variety of wild plants, give a rich and gay appearance to the banks of the hedgerows and the fields; and the cattle in many of them stray to the river's side, and are often seen standing as motionless as statues cooling themselves in the water.

Farther down, the valley is terminated by lofty and steep hills (and *there* the scene becomes more wild, rocky, and broken) that are clothed to their summits with wood, and form part of the ancient domain of Walreddon. At no great distance from Brook, and opposite to the spot where Drake was born, the Tavy is seen as clear as crystal. When I was last there, several sheep were grazing on a plot of grass that runs down to the water's brink, where some of them were drinking; and a whole flock of geese, that appeared quite familiar with their four-footed companions, flapped their wings and sailed upon the river as stately as swans, with the highest degree of enjoyment.

There is something peculiarly beautiful in this spot. It is so sequestered that it seems shut out from all the world. The surrounding objects are simple; there is nothing to produce surprise, or any other strong emotion, but all is tranquil and in harmony. There is cheerfulness in the verdure of the meadows; the little plot of grass is thickly set with tufts of daisies, and with the white clover, that banquet for the sheep. It is so sheltered, that the rudest winds seldom disturb its repose; and here the Tavy does not foam or rush along impetuously, but passes onward in gentle ripples,

“That sing the song which contemplation loves.”

And HERE DRAKE WAS BORN ; and here stood the old barn-looking cottage (for it was no better) in which he first drew breath, with its antique windows, and all its character of past times about it, till, alas for modern innovation ! this poor building, which should have been held sacred as long as one stone would rest upon another, was pulled down to give place to an ox-stall, or some such common appendage to the farm-house hard by.<sup>6</sup> This happened while Mr. Bray was in London, many years back ; for had he known it in time he would have written to the proprietor, the Duke of Bedford, to warn his Grace of the destruction that was meditated, against a vestige so replete with interest to all who are not insensible to the power of local and historical associations ; to all who delight to trace whatever may be connected with men, the greatness of whose designs is derived from that of their genius, and, God prospering them, who become an honour to their age and their country. Mr. Bray once suggested to the Duke of Bedford that, as the house no longer stood, it would be well to erect, as a memorial, a common block of granite near the spot, in the form of an obelisk, like the Romanized-British stones. He wrote, also, the following distich, by way of inscription, should the Duke think it worth while to have it cut in the block :—

“ Who the New World bade British thunders shake?  
Who marked out bounds to both ?—Our native Drake.”

I do not know whence Crowndale derived its

<sup>6</sup> Mr. Bray fortunately made a slight sketch of the house in which Drake was born, not long before it was pulled down. This was very incorrectly copied in the etching which appeared in Lewis's *Views of the Tavy*.

name. Mr. Bray, in one of his inscriptions,<sup>7</sup> has been pleased to consider it was so called from Edgar's having there offered the crown to Elfrida. An antiquary would ask his authority for such a supposition; but a poet will not be unwilling to admit it, though it have no surer basis than that of imagination.

Tradition, in this part of the West, is still busied with the fame of Drake; and all the stories told of him are of a wild and extravagant nature. No doubt this originated from the terror of his name, and the wonder of his exploits—exploits so extraordinary that they were here considered to owe their success to something supernatural in himself, and that he often performed them by the power of enchantment. Nor can we feel surprised at this credulity when we recollect that even in these days, with the peasantry of Devon, witchcraft is still believed to be practised in the county, and extraordinary circumstances or sufferings to be brought about by the active agency and co-operation of the devil.<sup>8</sup>

Thus was our hero converted, by popular opinion, into a wizard; and as such the 'old warrior' (for so the lower classes here call Drake) is to the present time considered amongst them. The following traditionary tales will serve to show the sort of

<sup>7</sup> "Fired by her charms, that far outshone renown,  
Edgar, on Tavy's banks, his kingly crown  
Laid at Elfrida's feet, as beauty's meed;  
And does not Crowndale still attest the deed?"

<sup>8</sup> Arthur Chichester, Esq., late of Grenofen, and now of Stokelake, told me a story of a farmer coming to him as a magistrate to consult how he had best proceed against an old woman, who had bewitched him in his arm, and his cattle also. I have known many similar instances.



necromantic adventures which credulity has fastened on the memory of the great naval admiral of the reign of good Queen Bess.

One day whilst Sir Francis Drake was playing at the game of kales<sup>9</sup> on the Hoe at Plymouth, it was announced to him that a foreign fleet (the Armada, I suppose) was sailing into the harbour close by. He showed no alarm at the intelligence, but persisted in playing out his game. When this was concluded, he ordered a large block of timber and a hatchet to be brought to him. He bared his arms, took the axe in hand, and manfully chopped up the wood into sundry smaller blocks. These he hurled into the sea, while at his command every block arose a fire-ship; and within a short space of time a general destruction of the enemy's fleet took place, in consequence of the irresistible strength of those vessels he had called up to 'flame amazement' on the foes of Elizabeth and of England. Wild as this story is, there is something of grandeur in the idea of Drake standing on such a commanding elevation as the Hoe, with the sea, which spreads itself at its foot, before him, and that element together with the fire-ships obedient to the power of his genius, whose energies were thus marvellously exerted for the safety of his country.

The next tradition respecting Sir Francis was communicated to me by our esteemed friend, Mr. Davies Gilbert, who has shown the interest he takes in such fragments of the 'olden time' by the very curious collection he some years ago published of the Cornish ballads.

<sup>9</sup> This is our provincial name for what, I believe, is nothing more than the common game of nine-pins, or skittles, now played by the vulgar in public-house yards.

In the days of Drake the vulgar considered the world to be composed of two parallel planes, the one at a certain distance from the other. In reference to this space it was commonly said that Sir Francis had '*shot the gulf*,' meaning that his ship had turned over the edge of the upper plane so as to pass on to the waters of the under. "There is," said Mr. Davies Gilbert, "an old picture of Drake at Oxford, representing him holding a pistol in one hand, which, in former years, the man who acted as showman to strangers was wont to say (still further improving upon the story) was the very pistol with which Sir Francis shot the gulf!"

Another story told of this hero is, that the people of Plymouth were so destitute of water in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, that they were obliged to send their clothes to Plympton to be washed in fresh water. Sir Francis Drake resolved to rid them of this inconvenience. So he called for his horse, mounted, rode to Dartmoor, and hunted about till he found a very fine spring. Having fixed on one that would suit his purpose, he gave a smart lash to his horse's side, pronouncing as he did so some magical words, when off went the animal as fast as he could gallop, and the stream followed his heels all the way into the town. This assuredly was not only the most wonderful, but the most cheap and expeditious, mode of forming a canal ever known or recorded by tradition.

The next story of Sir Francis is a very singular one, nor can I in the least trace its origin to any real circumstance which might have been exaggerated in the relation, till it became, like the other tales about our hero, necromantic. It seems in every way a

fiction. The good people here say that whilst the 'old warrior' was abroad, his lady, not hearing from him for seven years, considered he must be dead, and that she was free to marry again. Her choice was made, the nuptial day was fixed, and the parties had assembled in the church. Now it so happened that at this very hour Sir Francis Drake was at the antipodes of Devonshire, and one of his spirits, who let him know from time to time how things went on in England, whispered in his ear in what manner he was about to lose his wife. Sir Francis rose up in haste, charged one of his great guns, and sent off a cannon ball so truly aimed that it shot up right through the globe, forced its way into the church, and fell with a loud explosion between the lady and her intended bridegroom. "It is the signal of Drake," she exclaimed, "he is alive, and I am still a wife. There must be neither troth nor ring between thee and me."

Another legend of Sir Francis represents him as acting from motives of jealousy and cruelty, in a way he was very little likely to do. The story says that whilst he was once sailing in foreign seas he had on board the vessel a boy of uncommonly quick parts. In order to put them to the proof Sir Francis questioned the youth, and bade him tell what might be their antipodes at that moment. The boy without hesitation told him Barton Place, (for so Buckland Abbey was then called) the Admiral's own mansion in his native county. After the ship had made some further progress Sir Francis repeated his question, and the answer he received was, that they were then at the antipodes of London Bridge. Drake, surprised at the accuracy of the boy's knowledge,

exclaimed, "Hast thou, too, a devil? If I let thee live, there will be one a greater man than I am in the world;" and so saying he threw the lad overboard into the sea, where he perished.

There is likewise another legend concerning Drake, of which I have heard a confused account: it is something about the devil helping him to move a great stone, whilst he was repairing certain parts of Buckland Abbey; but I have so vague a recollection of this story, that I must not venture to repeat it in detail. You once mentioned having yourself heard this tradition when you were in Devon; and very possibly you may remember those particulars which I have forgotten.

The people of Tavistock say, that notwithstanding this place is fourteen miles from the sea, at Plymouth, Sir Francis Drake offered to make his native town a seaport, if the inhabitants would but have granted to him the estate of Milemead.

I have something more to say of Drake ere I quit the subject of local anecdotes about him; but this letter having run on to an unconscionable length, I must here conclude.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I cannot resist extracting from a letter which I had the honour to receive from Mr. Southey, in reply to the above, a passage or two respecting Drake.

"You have indeed collected a rich harvest of traditions concerning Sir Francis Drake. I had heard of his shooting the gulf; and of his pushing the boy overboard who knew that they were under London Bridge. My story of the stone is yours of the marriage: with this variation, that instead of a ball coming up through the earth, a huge round stone fell through the air upon the train of the intended bride's gown, as she was on the way to church; upon which she turned back, saying she knew it came from her husband. My story adds that the stone is still used as a weight upon the harrow of the farm; and if it be removed from the estate in which it fell, always returns thither. Yours is much the grander fiction. My story says, moreover, that it was not

long before Sir Francis returned, and in the dress of a beggar asked alms of his wife at her own door; but in the midst of his feigned tale a smile escaped him, and he was recognized, and of course joyfully embraced. This is borrowed from *Guy, Earl of Warwick*, and is found also in other romances. The miracle of leading the water is common in the lives of the saints, and especially of the Irish saints, who generally led it up hill to make the miracle the greater.

"These stories probably originated in the notion, which was very piously entertained by the Spaniards, that Drake dealt with the devil, and owed his success to the assistance which the devil gave him. The English Catholics were likely enough to have received this notion from their Spanish friends; and it made its way among the people because of its romantic character. The black art in popular tradition is no very black business when it is not employed for black purposes; and there is generally some contrivance for whitewashing such proficients as Drake, Friar Bungay, and Friar Bacon just in time;—Lope de Vega, to whose *Dragonía* I have this moment referred to refresh my memory, says of Drake, that our countrymen admitted he had dealings with the devil, and praised him for it, so that it was no calumny of Spain's,

Que no es en erto España mentirosa :

and that he (Lope), when he was in the Armada, had heard all this from some soldiers in the same ship, who had been eight years prisoners in England. The most curious piece of slanderous fiction concerning him which I have seen is in the Latin poem of a Jesuit. I shall extract it for a note in my *Naval History*; in which indeed, if your letters had been published, I should have been very much tempted to have incorporated all your stories."

## LETTER XXVII.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

Drake's residence at Buckland Abbey—His Family—His Father probably Vicar of Tavistock—His Exile into Kent—Date of Drake's Birth—The Six Articles—Sir Francis Russell his Godfather—Drake's Father—Francis Drake goes to Sea—Death of his Master, who leaves him his Ship—Drake related to Hawkins—Joins him in an enterprise—Spanish Treachery—Fuller's Apology for his Piracies—Arrives off America—Fortifies himself on the Coast—Joined by Rawse—Receives information of the state of Nombre de Dios—Prepares to attack the Town—He leads on to the King's Treasure—Panic—Leads on again; is dangerously wounded—Spanish Envoy, or Spy—His interview with the Captain—Parts company with Rawse—Spanish Settlements at Carthagena—Drake departs for Rio Grande—Surprised by a Hurricane—His Brother John goes in search of the Scymerons—Holds friendly communication with them—Waits to take from the Rivers the Gold cast into them—Drake's motive for desiring to possess Wealth—His Successes—Distress of the Crew—Arrives at Port Diego—His brother Joseph dies—Receives News that the Spanish fleet has arrived at Nombre de Dios to bear off the Treasures—Determines to possess them—A Spanish Ship captured—The Negroes wish to murder the Men—Drake protects them—Drake sets off on his Overland Expedition in pursuit of the Treasures—His Journey and Adventures—Ascends the great Tree—Sees the South Seas—Forms his resolution to be the first to sail an English Ship in those unknown Waters—His Prayer for success—Arrives near Panama—Marches towards Vera Cruz—Surprises a Spanish Soldier sleeping—The Mules laden with Treasure appear in sight—Assault and defence—Drake's Victory—

His Humanity to the Conquered—Drake sends his Token to the Captain to sail up the River—Drake on board the *Minion*—Sails to the Cabezas to seize the Treasure—Joined by a Frenchman—Proceeds for Rio Francisco—Spanish Soldiers who guard the Treasure overcome—Drake's Gallantry and Spirit—Constructs a Raft—Describes the Pinnaces—Joy at their Deliverance—Rewards the faithful Negro—Returns to England—Drake lands at Plymouth, 1573—Drake's great plan to sail in the unknown Seas—Quits the Shores of England, 1577—Driven back by a Storm—Sails again—Comes in sight of the Isle of Magadon—Lands—The Savages seize one of his Crew—Touches at Cape Blanc—The Inhabitants beg Water—His Fleet draws near the Line—Approach the Coast of Brazil—Inhabitants—Incantations to raise a Storm—April 7th, dreadful Storm—Drake enters the River Plate—Violent Tempest—Loss of the Fleet apprehended—He enters the *Elizabeth*—Sends Captain Winter to look after the missing Ships.

*Vicarage, Tavistock, Oct. 8th, 1832.*

IN returning to the subject of Drake, I cannot forbear observing that there is some reason to suppose our great naval hero retained throughout life an affection for the neighbourhood in which he was born; a feeling that we often see strongly marked in men of genius. It is not unlikely Drake (who by his own merit and God's favour rose from a poor lad to become the terror of Spain, and the wonder of England) might have a secret pleasure in visiting the scenes of his boyhood, where his ardent mind had employed itself in those visions of enterprise and forebodings of success which persons of great understanding at a very early period are apt to indulge, till they sometimes become prophets to themselves, as they feel within them a strong assurance, like the whisper of their better angel, that the course they have to run will be marked by more than ordinary things. Drake's fondness for Buckland Abbey, where

during his latter years he frequently resided whilst in England, is well known. There one of the finest portraits of him is still preserved, together with his Bible, his sword, and his ship-drum, which went with him round the world. He was also a munificent benefactor to Plymouth, by causing a supply of fresh water to be brought to that town, from a distance of many miles, over the rocky and elevated lands of Dartmoor. On the completion of the *Leat*, for so it is called, the mayor and corporation, dressed in their formalities, accompanied by Sir Francis, came out to meet the water, and followed the stream in procession, as it was for the first time permitted to flow into the town, whilst the ringing of bells and the discharge of cannon welcomed its arrival in full chorus.

On referring to your letter of March, 1831, where you suggested to me the subjects *you* would wish to see embraced in a local history, so as to make it of universal interest, you have named "the whole of its history and biography." The life of Sir Francis Drake, born in our parish, certainly comes under the latter class; and though I shall attempt to give little more than a *sketch* of it, particularly noticing any events that may be connected with the place of his birth; yet such *sketch* may not be unacceptable to those of my readers, especially in this part of England, who may never have had the good fortune to meet with Johnson's life of our hero; or Fuller's, or Prince's abbreviated notices of him in the *Worthies of Devon*. I have not unfrequently been surprised to find that, even some who are considered reading persons in this neighbourhood, knew very little more of Drake than that he was born here, sailed round



the world, and fought the Armada; whilst of his personal adventures, and the more minute circumstances of his history, replete as they are with wild and romantic interest, they knew nothing whatever, nor seemed to suspect there was anything worth knowing about them.

Francis Drake, the eldest of twelve male children, was the son of a minister of the Reformed Church. He was born in Crowndale, in the parish of Tavistock. The time of his birth, as will appear I think on examination, is very doubtful; and as our registers previous to 1614 were lost or destroyed, probably during the troublesome days of Charles I., there is here no record by which we can now ascertain the date with any certainty. That his father's connections were very respectable may be inferred by Sir Francis Russell, afterwards Earl of Bedford, standing sponsor to the child at the font, to whom he gave his own Christian name.

Whether Drake's father might have been the vicar of this place, I have not been able to discover; but as Sir Francis Russell held the Abbey lands given by Henry VIII., the patronage of our church came likewise to him, and he might have nominated Drake to the living of Tavistock.

It has been generally asserted by historians that our naval hero was born about the year 1545. This, however, I think I shall prove to be incorrect, since it was *after* his birth that his father fled from Devon to conceal himself in Kent, in consequence of his nonconformity to the fearful Six Articles. Now as these articles became a law in 1539, how could Francis Drake, who, when yet a child, was the companion of his father's flight into Kent, to avoid the danger he

incurred by dissent, have been born so long after as 1545?

It may be urged that if Drake held the living of Tavistock (as very likely he did), he might on the appearance of the Six Articles have thrown it up, and retired from the old vicarage in the town to the poor barn-looking house in Crowndale, in 1539; and might not have quitted that humble retreat, where he assuredly lived in indigence, till some intimation was conveyed to him that the law would be enforced against him for his disobedience. Admitting this to be probable, it is not likely he would have been suffered to remain unmolested in Crowndale for so long a period as till the year 1545. And another argument may be urged in support of the opinion that his son Francis was born *before* the articles in question were established by law; namely, that it is most improbable Sir Francis Russell—a man so highly favoured and enriched by Henry, and one who so well understood the character of his benefactor—would have exposed himself to the risk of displeasing his royal master, by standing sponsor and giving his own name to the son of a clergyman who refused compliance with the very articles the king had set up; and one of them under a penalty as cruel as that ordained by Nebuchadnezzar himself in support of his idol—the fiery death, on denial of the same.<sup>1</sup> This circumstance alone surely will go far to prove that our Drake was born previous to that memorable epoch in the history of the church; and be it also remembered

<sup>1</sup> All persons denying the Real Presence in the Sacrament were, by the first of Henry's Six Articles, subjected to be burnt alive, and to forfeiture of goods, &c., the same as on a conviction of high treason.

that Sir Francis Russell to the last preserved the favour of Henry,—a sure sign he was a cautious man in his conduct towards that tyrant.

I have somewhat dwelt on this point, because in most of the books I have seen about Drake (excepting Johnson's, where no date is given), the authors will have it that he was born in 1545. Where is their authority?

In what manner Drake's father supported himself and his increasing family after his flight into Kent is not known; probably he had friends who assisted him in his concealment; and as a man who from religious motives placed his very life in peril of an arbitrary law could not be other than conscientious in all points of duty, it will not be conjecturing too much if we consider that the devout feelings that marked the character of our great naval captain throughout life were derived from the early example and instructions of his father. At one period this good man was so much in fear of persecution, that he lay for a considerable time concealed in the hull of a ship, somewhere off the Kentish coast. On the death of Henry, however, he obtained a situation as chaplain in the navy; and it was about this time that he bound Francis apprentice to the master of a small barque that traded to France and Zealand. His service was a hard one on ship-board, but it was not without the reward of his fidelity; for his master, dying unmarried, left Francis Drake his ship as a legacy, with all things belonging to the same. On this event Johnson, with that moralizing spirit which renders all his works so beautiful and so instructive, observes "that virtue is the surest foundation both of reputation and

fortune, and that the first step to greatness is to be honest."

Let us imagine for a moment what must have been the feelings of such a mind as Drake's, on finding himself at once master of that little world, for such is a ship, which was by degrees to become the means of advancing him in the necessary knowledge of the seas, in the patience of experience, the constancy of courage, and in the advantages of industry, till he should compass the world itself, the first British navigator who had the boldness to conceive and to execute such a plan. Hitherto he had been in the best school for learning to govern others—that of obedience and faithful service to his master; since we generally find in life those persons who have submitted to power in the onset of their career, are the safest with whom it may be trusted in a riper age. For some time Drake followed his old master's trade with diligence and success; but narrow seas and a large mind could ill agree together; the first were not calculated to admit the exercise of those great enterprises which his genius and his activity prompted him to undertake. He therefore sold the barque in which his infant fortunes had been cradled on the seas, and full of those golden dreams with which projects of the New World now filled all heads, the strongest as well as the weakest, he prepared to venture his gains in the trade of the Western Indies. It is not a little amusing to look back, in old writers, for the accounts which they brought home of the New World; where gold and jewels were described to be almost as plentiful as in the *Arabian Tales*, and where they seemed to lie as easy of access as if the adventurers carried with them the wonderful lamp of Aladdin, to procure

such treasures by a wish, a word, and a turn of the hand.

Drake was related to Hawkins, whose family were of very ancient standing in the county of Devon. Captain John Hawkins had projected an enterprise to the West Indies, and as the reputation of his cousin Francis as a good seaman was now fully established, he was not sorry to be joined by him in the undertaking. It was a luckless one for both ; since the gold and silver they had in view were protected by something that to Drake was more formidable than any danger would have been in an open and obvious form—Spanish treachery ; and soon did he and his friend feel its effects. For notwithstanding that England and Spain were then on terms of peace, and that these adventurers had received permission from the Viceroy to traffic in the Bay of Mexico, they were so suddenly and treacherously attacked by the Spaniards, that Hawkins lost several ships and men, and Drake the whole of his property, which had been embarked in the speculation. In a moment of irritation, when all the fruits of his industry (gathered in the little barque where his humble fortunes had been more true to him than his greater expectations) were lost for ever, he vowed to wreak his vengeance on the Spaniards. He has been charged by some, more particularly the envious of his own time, with having kept this vow more rigidly than justly ; but Fuller seems willing to clear Sir Francis of this charge, and therefore puts the burthen of the blame on another man's shoulders : for he says, " that after Drake's goods were taken by the Spaniards at St. John de Ulloa, and he himself scarcely escaped with life, to make him satisfaction Mr. Drake was

persuaded by the minister of the ship that he might lawfully recover the value of the king of Spain, by reprisal, and repair his losses upon him anywhere else: the case was clear in sea-divinity; and few are such infidels as not to believe doctrines which make for their own profit: whereupon Drake, though then a poor private man, undertook to revenge himself upon so mighty a monarch."

This early check in the fortunes of our townsman, that would have broken the spirits and ruined the enterprise of an ordinary man, was with him perhaps an advantage: since so strong are the resources of strong minds, that it is not till roused by adversity and the most formidable obstacles, they know their own power or put forth their utmost energies; and even if such minds bend for awhile, it is but like the bending of the archer's bow, to acquire their necessary impetus. Another cause also might have operated to produce those extraordinary exertions which enabled Drake so soon to rise again after these disasters; his mind was not of that order which can rest in the present: men of his mould call up their recollections of the past to aid their judgment in the future; and the remembrance of misfortune, therefore, is with them less an evil than a monitor, by whose assistance experience becomes wisdom.

Intent on the plan of reprisals recommended to him by 'Sea-divinity,' and having found how necessary it was to arm himself with caution as the best mode to avoid the snares of treachery, with little means and great patience Drake made two or three voyages, first in the *Dragon*, and afterwards in the *Swan*, to render himself perfectly well acquainted with the coast, and to gain all necessary intelligence respecting

the Spanish settlements; in these voyages of investigation he fell in with some minor Spanish vessels, and having gained a prize or two, it helped to repair his broken fortunes. He was soon after in commission, and reached the rank of captain; now therefore he determined no longer to delay the execution of that vow, by which he had called heaven to witness that he would requite his injuries on the king of Spain.

Pursuant to this plan, on Whitsun-eve, May 24th, 1572, Drake, in the *Pascha* of seventy tons, accompanied by his brother John, in the *Swan* of twenty-five tons, with no greater force than seventy-three men and boys, including the crews of both vessels, weighed anchor from Plymouth, then the most frequented harbour of England. The day was delightful; and as Drake set forth with his little armament on so bold an enterprise, whilst the waves gently bowed their proud crests before him, and with yielding submission received the barque that was destined to perform such wonders on their turbulent domain, we may fancy the exhilarating hopes that played, like the beams of that day's sun, around his enterprise, and gave to the brave heart which formed it some assurance and presentiment of his success.

The vessels steered their course for Nombre de Dios, a town where vast quantities of wheat from Panama were stored to await the opportunity of being conveyed into Spain. In the month of June they hove in sight of the high lands of Sancta Martha, in America, and directed their course to Port Pheasant, so named by Drake in a previous voyage, from the vast number of birds of that description which he had observed near the coast. In this spot, in every

way convenient, he proposed to build up the pinnaces which he had ready on board his own ship for that purpose. But whilst rowing towards the bay he observed a smoke arise from the woods, and not knowing with what number of his enemies he might have to encounter, he caused a reinforcement of men to join him from the ships. He landed, when on advancing towards the woods, on a tree so large that, Fuller says, "four men could not fathom [encompass] it," he saw a plate of lead that had been nailed aloft by his friend Captain Garret, of Plymouth, giving him warning to depart from those shores, as the Spaniards had discovered that convenient harbour, and his stay there would be dangerous. The plate was dated only five days before it was thus seen; and the smoke in the woods was found to arise from a large burning tree, no doubt set on fire by Garret to draw the attention of his brother navigator to the spot.

Drake, however, was not to be deterred from his purpose by the fear of such enemies, and so, adopting a plan of precaution that De Foe, probably from this circumstance, afterwards made one of defence to Robinson Crusoe's cave, he caused his men to fell certain trees growing near the shore, which (if a very old book that I am now consulting respecting the voyages of Drake speaks truth) were nothing less than 'forty yards about,' and with these he set up a wall that was as stout as his own heart, and would stand battering like a feudal castle. Under cover of this wall the captain and his men built up the pinnaces; nor did he wish, perhaps, for 'more men from England,' though had he done so the wish would not have been in vain; for here he was joined by his friend Captain Rawse, of the Isle of Wight.



The little fleet, with this new accession of strength, now set sail towards Nombre de Dios; and near the Isle of Pines they fell in with two frigates, of which they speedily made themselves masters. From some negroes on board these ships Drake gained intelligence of import; namely, that Nombre de Dios expected the arrival of some troops to defend the town from the attack of the Scymerons; a race of blacks who, driven by cruelty, had escaped from their tyrannical Spanish masters, and had formed themselves into a kingdom under two monarchs of their own choosing and people. The negroes, whose information was most important to Drake, he set on shore, so that they might join their countrymen, the Scymerons, and not have it in their power, by going back to their old masters, to give any intelligence of his being in the neighbourhood of his enemies.

Leaving three ships and the carrack with Captain Rawse, and selecting fifty-three of the best men, armed with pikes, targets, fire-arms, the old English bow and the cloth-yard arrow, weapons then not out of fashion, and taking also a couple of drums, with a trumpeter as herald, Drake departed on his bold adventure, and in five days approached the enemy's shore, where, having represented to his men the greatness of the enterprise, the richness of the spoil, and how much a determined courage would enable them to possess it, he prepared to assault the town at the dawn of the ensuing day. But as dangers are more formidable when dwelt upon in expectation, and are best encountered by that activity which allows no leisure for their becoming magnified by fear, Drake soon found how necessary it was to

subdue the panic fast spreading amongst his people by at once leading them on to action, as their own scanty numbers and the greatness of the hazard seemed to depress every heart.

The town was without walls ; and many of the people, surprised by the sudden nature of the attack, fled on the first shock in every direction. Some however attempted resistance, several were killed, and a few taken prisoners. Drake obliged one of these to guide him to the governor's house, where the treasures of the mines of Panama were deposited in heaps. On entering this storehouse of riches, the first view seemed to realize all the extravagant accounts that had been brought home about the wealth of the New World ; for the silver was piled in bars of immense weight and bulk, so that each man who might hope to take his share considered his fortune ready laid before him, and needing but the stretching forth his hand to make it his own. But every one of these soon found wealth indeed a burthen ; and that danger and death must be defied before they could convey it to the boats, and secure its possession. Drake saw the hazard and the difficulty of encumbering his people with booty which must retard or frustrate their march. The pursuit of fortune, however, is not easily abandoned, even when the universal spoiler, death himself, stands ready to intercept it ; and the number of those Spaniards who were now fast gathering in order to make a determined resistance rendered the case desperate, unless the English acted more as soldiers than as spoilers.

At this crisis, it was not by the influence of reason alone, but of hope, that Drake could induce his men to abandon the El Dorado of the governor's stores :

for he promised them greater things, would they but follow him; he would lead them forward to the king's treasure, where gold and jewels, instead of silver, should become the guerdon of their labours. They believed and followed him, as he guided them to his brother, and stout John Oxenham, a fellow-townsmen of the captain, where they had already drawn up with their detachment, in the market-place of the town. But whilst Drake, who was now suffering from and concealing a sharp wound he had received, displayed that courage and conduct which marked all his actions, the violent desire his men had shown for riches was suddenly succeeded by the frequent attendant of that passion—fear. The apprehension that the Spaniards would avail themselves of these moments to master the pinnaces, and so cut off their retreat, struck such a panic into their hearts, that they were now as eager to secure the ships, as the sight of the treasure had before rendered them careless about their safety. Drake, however, learning from one he had sent forward to inquire that there was little cause for this alarm, persisted in leading on to the king's treasure.

After ordering Oxenham, his brother John, and their people to seize the king's treasure, Drake led the rest of the men to take their stand in the market, so as to oppose the scattered soldiers of the garrison, who might otherwise become dangerous if suffered to unite into one body. But loss of blood from his wound overpowered the strong spirit of the leader; he fell to the earth as he was about to advance; and now was it first known to all that, whilst acting with such firmness and resolution, Drake had suffered an effusion of blood so great as actually to fill the marks

of his footsteps as he moved. The sight of their beloved captain on the point of death, for no one expected he could survive that hour, recalled their better judgment; and they felt that the life of a brave man was of more value than the treasures of Panama. All were eager to bear him off in safety; though Drake, restored to a sense of suffering by the strong drink they had given him, was the only man who expressed a wish that the enterprise might not be abandoned for his sake. But for once their fears had taken a right direction, and alarmed for their captain's preservation, not even his own entreaty could prevail with them to risk it. They tore the scarf he wore from off his shoulders, bound up his wounds, and with all speed carried him back to the boats, and thence to the ships, by the dawn of the next day.

They here made no capture but that of taking from the bay a vessel whose cargo was of wine; and directing their course to a neighbouring island, they reposed there a few days to recruit themselves after their late disastrous exploit. During this interval, a Spanish gentleman was deputed by the governor of Nombre de Dios to visit Drake, and learn if he might be the same person who the year before had landed on those shores; if the arrows he had used in the late assault were poisoned; and, if so, what must be done to cure the Spaniards of their wounds? This envoy acquitted himself with credit in his commission, and paid the captain many compliments on the courage he had displayed to the cost of the town. Drake, though he guessed him to be a spy, received his compliments with courtesy, sent him away with a gift of some value, and with the as-

surance that he knew too well what belonged to the laws of civilized nations to send poisoned arrows from an English bow; but that he would never desist in making "reprisals on the king of Spain, by sharing with him some of that gold and silver which he got out of the earth in order to trouble it."

Shortly after this Drake and Captain Rawse parted company; the latter having formed so ill an opinion of the expedition that he desired no longer to remain a participator in what he anticipated would be an eventual failure and disgrace. His companion was too wise to be thus easily disheartened: for though great success may, by a concurrence of fortunate circumstances, attend the adventurous and laborious in the outset of their career, yet success generally speaking is like a coy mistress, who must long be wooed, and that too through many a repulse, ere she is won. Drake knew well enough, before he saw it confirmed in the conduct of Rawse, that with common minds it is success alone that gains confidence and constitutes merit. Few are above the prejudices of the many: with them the question is, What has a man gained? not, What does he deserve? If reputation be his, it is well; and the way is opened to call forth and encourage his most ardent endeavours; since reputation gives power as it expands, even as those winds carry on the vessel, as they swell the sail with which they only played before, and passed by whilst the canvass hung useless on the mast.

Drake knew how much his reputation at home, as well as abroad, depended on the success of this hardy enterprise: he would be extolled for its very daring if all went well, but censured for little short of mad-

ness if he returned back with nothing but a shattered bark, and loss of time and means. He now, therefore, held debate with his own spirit, that never gave him other than bold counsel, and it impelled him to proceed.

Having learnt, from a black he received on board at the bay of Nombre de Dios, that the richest of the Spanish settlements were at Carthagená, he resolved to make what sail he could to attack that place. On the 13th of August, the *Pascha*, the *Swan*, and the three pinnaces, anchored between the islands of Charesha and St. Bernard. Drake, on bringing the vessels into the harbour, observed at the entrance a ship at anchor. In this he discovered, to his surprise, but one old man, who freely gave him all the information that was required, and told him "that the ship's company were gone on shore that evening to fight about a young lady, who had occasioned a quarrel between some of them on board." He also said, "that about two hours before a pinnacle had passed by with an appearance of haste; and whilst so doing warned the crew to look to themselves, for an enemy was at hand. Drake having heard, before he received this intelligence of his being discovered, guns firing as signals in the harbour, gave up his design of attacking Carthagená; since it must be a hopeless enterprise whilst the town stood in readiness to resist him; so much had he calculated on that distraction which a surprise was likely to spread amongst his enemies, as necessary to his success. He was, however, somewhat recompensed for his disappointment by capturing a large Spanish ship and two smaller vessels.

Drake having found that the pinnaces, from their

lightness and fast sailing, were more useful to him in these seas than his brother's ship, and that he had not hands enough to man both the larger vessels, determined to accomplish by stratagem a plan he had formed to free himself from the incumbrance of the *Swan*, to whose destruction he felt certain his brother never would consent, as, being master of her, he had grown fond of the vessel. There was on board her a carpenter named Thomas Moon, to whom Drake confided not only his plan, but the charge of its execution. This was nothing less than, that in the night, whilst all the crew were asleep, he should bore some holes in the well of the *Swan*, sufficiently large to render her incapable of sailing, however much, like the bird after which she was called, she had hitherto floated on the waters.

Moon probably considered the captain who formed this plan was under the influence of that planet whose name the carpenter had himself the honour to bear, since, expressing the utmost astonishment at the proposal, he frankly told the projector he had no mind to be hanged by his brother for sinking his ship. But Drake, chief in command, gave him his word that a rope should neither touch his neck nor his back for doing this service, if it were discovered ; and if not, certainly there was no likelihood, however musical swans might be in their death-note, that this would tell the tale of her end. On the next morning Drake invited his brother to go fishing with him ; and as they rowed off, he casually asked what it was that made the *Swan* lie so deep in the water. Inquiry followed ; when, to the consternation of her master, he found there was six feet of water in the hold. All hands were set to work at the pumps ; but it was too

late to find a remedy; and Drake advised that the ship, when all the stores had been taken out of her, should be burnt. This advice, though reluctantly, was put in execution, and the captain's project completely effected, for his favourite pinnaces were now manned as he required.

Not long after this, Drake departed for the Rio Grande, where he took in a supply of fresh water. Here they moored close inshore; and during the night were surprised by one of those fearful hurricanes common in such latitudes. So awful was the thunder and lightning, that it astonished and even filled with terror the minds of such of the crew as had never before witnessed a storm in this part of the world. Drake assured them it would soon pass, and be succeeded by a dead calm. This happened; but the calm brought with it a swarm of flies and mosquitoes that stung them even to torture, and proved worse than the storm. Here, on the next morning, they were descried by a Spaniard on the opposite side of the river, who, mistaking them for his countrymen, waved his hat, and shook his long hanging sleeves, as a signal that they should approach. They obeyed the summons, but no sooner did they touch the shore than, finding his error, the Spaniard ran away; and leaving his plantations and his stores at the mercy of the English, Drake probably thought his vow of reprisals on the king of Spain extended to the subjects of that monarch, for he did not scruple to load his men with such a sufficient reinforcement of wines and good cheer, that they were obliged to build four magazines here, to contain the spoils now seized, together with those they removed from the ships, placing them at such distances that if one should be



taken the rest would probably remain undiscovered and secure.

During this interval his brother John had been in search of the Scymerons, those independent negroes who had fled from their Spanish masters, and set up a kingdom for themselves. With these Drake purposed to open a friendly communication, as only by their assistance could he now expect to accomplish the great object of his hopes. A place therefore was appointed by his brother, after an exchange of hostages, for the captain to hold this meeting with the leaders of the blacks. And this he found to be an island as beautiful as it was convenient ; where, from the rocks that guarded the river, it was impossible he could be surprised by an attack during the night.

The acquisition of Spanish gold and silver seems to have been the great aim of Drake's reprisals on the king of Spain ; since, learning from the negroes that during the rainy season, now set in, there was no hope they could draw up from the rivers the treasures which they had taken from the Spaniards and had cast into them for concealment, he determined to wait the proper season for such fishing. But though in all these expeditions treasure was the object, I cannot fancy that a mind like Drake's could be influenced by the mere acquisition of metals, however bright and rare. It was the enterprise, the difficulty, the activity of spirit, the genius to form and the boldness to execute schemes that a less daring man would never have dreamt of, that prompted his purpose. The interest was in the danger of the pursuit more than in the profit to be gained by it : since, could Drake have possessed himself of the whole wealth of Panama by quietly

trading for it in the city of London, Spanish gold would probably have had as little attractions for him as the patient and calculating commerce by which it must be gained in drudgery and peace. He was something like the racers in the ancient games, who would not have stooped to pluck a laurel from the finest tree that ever bloomed, but who would strive for it to the death when woven as the crown of victory. Another motive might also have influenced Drake's eager pursuit of wealth : he might have found how absolutely necessary it was to acquire it in order to secure such assistance as he needed in carrying on his great and after-enterprises, which at this period he could only meditate upon, without having the present means to attempt.

To return to the subject. In the interval that must pass before the cessation of the rainy season Drake could not rest unemployed. After, therefore, building a fortress of timber with the assistance of the negroes, he determined to cruise the pinnaces in those seas, and commenced his plan by taking a ship off Carthagera, but did not land on the coast. A stratagem was now attempted by the Spaniards to get him into their power ; for one of his old prisoners, to whom he had given liberty, artfully came to him as on a friendly errand, to offer him a supply of necessaries, in the hope that such fair promises might induce him to land at disadvantage. Drake suspected the snare, and avoided it ; and not long after the enemy sent out two frigates against him, but these he compelled to withdraw ; and, having sunk one prize and burnt another before their eyes, his prudence for once forsook him, as he committed the extravagant act of leaping from the

boat and standing *alone* on the shore, in sight of the Spanish troops ; yet such was the reputation of his courage, the terror of his name, and the fear of his pinnaces, that no one could be found bold enough to venture to approach him with any hostile purpose. Such a single-handed exploit as this would have been worthy Don Quixote, or any of those heroes of the old romance whom he imitated ; but Johnson, though he censures the imprudence of Drake in this action, observes that possibly he might consider it would not only contribute to heighten him in the esteem of his own followers, but in the opinion of the Spaniards, who were great admirers of chivalry and romance, and who might yield the more easily to a hero of whose fortitude they had so high an idea.

Finding the country in arms against him, Drake resolved to leave the coast of Carthagera for Rio de Heba, though so ill was he prepared for any new enterprise, and so much did his men murmur at their distresses, being reduced to a great scarcity of necessary food, that it was only by the determined spirit he evinced that he could induce them to believe the repeated assurances he made, that would they but follow him with willing hearts, he would find a way, and speedily, to supply all their wants. But they had not sailed far when sickness, the consequence of such hardships, began to spread among them, and the quartermaster, a very skilful seaman, died in a few days.

In this state of distress Drake resolved to return to the Scymerons, with whom he had left his brother and *his* people, to attempt an inland and sudden attack upon the enemy. But this was destined to be the dark hour in the fortunes of Drake ; for on his

arrival at Port Diego among his negro friends, he learned that his brother, being driven by the impetuosity of his men, against his own better judgment, to a rash attempt, had met his death whilst boarding a Spanish frigate, and almost unarmed for defence. Not many days after he had received this melancholy intelligence, his younger brother Joseph died in his arms, of that malignant distemper which carried off so many of the crew. This was a severe trial of the fortitude of Drake, for so much did the sick at this moment stand in danger, that his sorrow was divided between regret for the dead and alarm for the living; and scarcely had he paid the last rites of fraternal regard when he was again called into action.

The Scymérons brought him word that the Spanish fleet had arrived at Nombre de Dios to bear off the treasures of Panama to the king. These treasures must be transported overland to the vessels, and possibly might be intercepted and taken by a vigorous attack. This, therefore, was the moment in which Drake could most effectually make reprisals on the king. Glad, perhaps, of an opportunity which, by the necessity of great exertions, would rouse his mind from the gloom that cast so heavy a cloud upon his spirit, he determined to lose no time in executing his premeditated attempt. With all activity, therefore, did he prepare for the enterprise: nor can we wonder at this, since from the perpetual variety of circumstances, escapes, and dangers, that render sudden transitions of feeling as a second nature in the character of seamen, they are of all classes the least liable to indulge grief with inaction. Probably no sailor ever yet broke his heart whilst on ship-board in the career of his duties.

At this juncture one of Drake's pinnaces, that had been sent to Nombre de Dios to ascertain the fact if the Spanish fleet might be arrived there or not, captured a frigate of the enemy on its return to the captain, and brought her, with all hands prisoners, safe inshore. The sight of so many Spaniards on board aroused in the negroes their old fury of revenge, to which the tyranny of their former masters had in the first instance given birth; and they now begged Drake to give the prisoners up to them that they might satisfy their vengeance in the blood of these victims. Drake, who received the proposal with the horror it deserved, now assumed that command over his allies which he exercised at all times over his own people, and would not suffer a hair of the captives' heads to be touched, ordering them to be placed in his own pinnace for their security and protection.

Soon after this he set out on this hazardous attempt, taking with him not more than twenty of his men (so many having been swept off by the fever) and about twenty-eight of the blacks, armed with weapons for hunting and fowling as well as for battle. In their march Drake conformed entirely to the manner of living of the Scymerons—resting at night in deep and sequestered valleys, where, not unlike the Celtic nations, they set up circular huts, thatched them with the branches of the palm-tree, and left a hole at the conical top for a chimney, and a small aperture by way of entrance. Some of these huts were found ready to their hand, having been constructed in previous marches up the country. The more minute circumstances recorded of this journey are full of interest, and deserve to be repeated, were they not too numerous to find a place in an account of Drake

which must of necessity be confined to the narrow limits of a sketch.

I must not, however, pass in silence the mention of on thing so much to the honour of our hero, that in his wanderings through these difficult tracts, in a land of hostility, he forgot not that Power which went before his path, and was as a shield to him against danger. The poor Scymerons had acquired some imperfect knowledge of Christianity from their old Spanish masters; but their faith, like that of too many converts, rather consisted in an observance of the superstitions than of the spirit of their new religion. For though, as we have lately seen, they scrupled not to beg the blood of their captive enemies, they failed not to bow reverently before the Cross; a custom which Drake taught them to abandon, and in its stead to repeat the Lord's Prayer.

The greater part of their journey was indeed delightful, for they travelled through thick woods, and under shadowy palms that clothed the hills and sheltered the valleys from the wind and the sun, whilst they often stopped on the greensward, and reposed, as the gentle breeze played upon them, by the side of some rivulet or stream which ran trickling past the green turf, and served them as a fountain to cool their thirst, or refresh their limbs after the labour of hunting their food in the woods. At length they arrived on the summit of a lofty eminence, where there stood a tree of such enormous growth that it was held a wonder by the Scymerons, who pointed it out to Drake, and told him that from its top might plainly be descried both the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans. In the latter no English vessel had yet

spread her sails. In order to ascend this tree of observation with greater ease, Drake caused a flight of steps to be cut in it, and the day being remarkably clear he mounted to its top.

Thence he viewed with extreme delight the magnificent scene which from such a height was spread like a map before him. There lay the boundless Pacific, seen in its most opposite points; that ocean of which fame had spoken with such golden promise, and had rendered the theme of wonder as well as of praise. The sight of *this* to a mind like Drake's, whose desires were even yet more boundless than those seas, since they compassed the vast globe, produced the most powerful effect: for as he looked on the interminable waters, seen in the distance as if mingling themselves with the clouds, he felt the kindling emotions of his genius. And as the vast and the noble are ever allied to genius, whatever be the object of pursuit, and (except in minds wholly perverted) can never be separated from some strong feeling of the Divinity, his emotions raised his thoughts to Him who had formed that august scene by which he was surrounded; and calling on God to grant him but life once to sail an English ship in those unknown seas, he declared the utmost desire of his soul would be accomplished. The prayer was heard and granted; for, God prospering him, Drake lived to become the British navigator who, in the language of our great poet,

“First bound a girdle round about the earth.”

Soon after this the captain and his followers arrived safe within a short distance of Panama, the town whence the treasure was to be transported to

Nombre de Dios. Having gained intelligence by one of the most acute amongst the Scymerons, employed for that purpose as a spy, that the treasurer of Lima would on that very night set forward with his mules burthened with gold and precious stones, Drake immediately marched towards Vera Cruz. Near this town they surprised a Spanish soldier, took him prisoner, and from him they received whatever information they required at this juncture.

The captain now commanded his men to observe a strict silence, to lie down in the long grass, in two separate bodies, one on either side the road, and on no account to disturb the Recoes who were coming *from* Vera Cruz, since such carried nothing but common merchandize to Panama, and the *latter* was the quarter whence came the expected spoils. He also commanded Oxenham to seize the foremost Recoe, and the chief of the blacks to do the same by the hindmost, as the mules of the Recoes travelled in a string, the one having a bridle of communication with the other; so that if the foremost received a check, all stood still. The Spanish drovers, with whose character Cervantes and Quevedo have rendered us so familiar, were at all times very fond of their mules, and not only dressed them up with a profusion of gay colours, but hung about their necks a number of little bells, whose sound, which they thought delighted the ears of the animals as much as it did their own, gave notice of their approach in the darkest night.

Drake's orders had been precise, and so simple that it seemed impossible they could be circumvented: yet though it had cost him so much time, labour, and thought to bring his enterprise to bear, it cost a drunken man but one act of folly to upset the whole



without plan or purpose; and so it is often seen in human life, in things of less as well as of greater moment than Drake's reprisals on the King of Spain. Days and years of toil are sometimes spent with no other profit to the laborious than the secret and melancholy consciousness that he deserved a better reward than he found: when perhaps he may at length be on the eve of success, some cross turn of fortune, some cunning enemy or some foolish friend may step in and mar all, leaving the luckless person to a renewed exercise of that patience which often outlives hope; for patience, though a great virtue, is not always friendly to exertion. However, Drake's patience, hopes, and perseverance, like his three favourite pinnaces, always held company together; and this night they were to be put to no small trial, after all his pains.

The accident which now occurred had its origin with one Robert Pike, (a Tavistock man, and consequently a fellow-townsmen with our captain) and who, notwithstanding the foolish manner in which he acted in this instance, afterwards rose, by fighting and beating three Spaniards, who came in united opposition against him, to the rank of captain; and by that honourable style was for many a day remembered in the place that gave him birth. Pike, deprived of all prudence by the quantity of brandy he had taken, quitted his station, and prevailed with one of the negroes to bear him company, that they might display their courage by being the first who should sally forth and stop the mules without the assistance of their fellows. This act of folly betrayed them to the observation of a passenger, who speedily conveyed his suspicions to the town: the treasure was held back;

so that when Drake and his people came to seize the mules, they found them laden with nothing but provisions, and learnt from the Recoe they made prisoner, that the whole force of the country was likely to be upon them. In this situation there was no choice but that of retreat, which would show their own fears, or to force their way to Vera Cruz: as the latter was the most bold and hazardous scheme, it suited best with the spirit of Drake; it was therefore adopted.

Within a short distance of the town they found stationed, ready to receive them, a body of Spaniards, assisted by a whole convent of monks, who were determined on this occasion to act as the church militant against the famous heretical Captain of England. No sooner did he appear than they called upon him to yield; a call that was answered by Drake with the discharge of his pistol; and immediately after he gave the signal for action. The assault and defence were conducted on either side with much warmth; but the English arrows were found irresistible; the enemy was driven back, as the Scymerons exulted over their defeat in shouts and war-songs of victory.

The inhabitants of the town were thrown into a state of the utmost consternation; to appease which Drake, with a generosity like that which animated the warlike in times of ancient chivalry, not only commanded his men to spare all who offered no resistance, and to respect the sanctity of the churches, where no spoil was to be committed, but went himself and quieted the fears of the principal ladies, by an assurance that all of their sex he considered that night as under his own especial protection. So much did this union, of courage and gentleness work on the

minds of the conquered, different as it was from the unsparing temper of the Spanish conquerors, that they looked on Drake as something more than human ; and a feeling of confidence blended itself with that of awe, which his hardihood and extraordinary success everywhere inspired.

Though Drake spared the lives and respected the feelings of his enemies, he showed in this exploit no mercy to their purses. The spoils, however, here gained he divided amongst his men and the negroes, refusing all share of them himself, and still looking to the treasures of the King of Spain for his own reprisals of victory ; a prospect which neither toil nor disappointment could induce him to forego. But the safety of his crew was now the first object ; and he felt how necessary it was that no delay should take place in his return to the ships. Still the march overland to the coast was long and wearisome ; and one that required all his energies to render other than a source of murmuring and peril to his people. In this emergency he took the wisest means to support their spirits, by showing in his own person how easily hardships may be borne where there is courage to meet and to endure them. In moments where all depended on sudden and extraordinary exertions, we have seen that Drake could use even reproaches to stimulate their endeavours ; but where the operations that lead to success were of a less exciting and more tedious nature, and required patience to bring about their issue, Drake used kindness and encouragement in his exhortations, shared all their toils, and even the pain of hunger with them, when want of food reduced them to necessity and weakness.

On their arrival within a few leagues of the ships,

they found on the banks of the river Tortugas one of those towns consisting of huts thatched with the branches of the palmetto, that had been built during their absence by the Scymerons. Here the weary reposed; and Drake, anxious to afford them relief, sent forward his token by a negro to the master of his own pinnace, with orders that he should sail her up to him with all speed. The master received the token—a gold toothpick case—with a doubtful mind; for the captain had charged him to consider none as authentic unless his own handwriting also bore witness to its validity. The negro, however, soon satisfied his doubts by telling him that the English leader had scratched something on the token with the blade of a knife; and on more closely examining it he soon perceived the words, '*By me, Francis Drake.*' The pinnace was immediately sent forward, and all the company finally uniting on the 23rd day of February, Drake hallowed it by appointing it as a day of solemn thanksgiving to Almighty God, who, after all their hardships, had thus brought them in safety together.

Soon after this Drake, being on board his pinnace, the *Minion*, sailed to the Cabezas, in order to seize the treasure which he had learnt from the Scymerons was to be transported from Veragua to the Spanish vessels at Nombre de Dios. At Cabezas he captured a ship, and John Oxenham, in the *Bear*, also took another, stored, not with gold, but with good fat hens, hogs, and maize, or Indian corn. The last prize so well pleased the captain, that he determined to sail in her and attack the Spanish fleet at Nombre de Dios. He was soon after met by a Frenchman, whose commander, named Tetu, begged he might be permitted to join Drake both in the expedition and the spoils

that were likely to accrue from it. They set sail in company together in the frigate and two of the pinnaces, for the Cabezas, where they left the first-mentioned vessel, finding she was too large to pass the shallows. Proceeding for Rio Francisco, they landed and ordered the pinnaces to return to the same spot in four or five days to receive them. Drake then set out on his inland expedition, accompanied by a certain number of his men, his French allies, and the Scymerons. Their way was through thick woods, and after a fatiguing journey, as they arrived within little more than a mile of Nombre de Dios, they could hear persons at work in the harbour; the hour being no interruption to labour, since indeed in those warm latitudes more work is effected in the night than in the day.

They soon observed the mules and their drivers advancing from Panama; and at that sight every man thought of nothing but the riches he was now to call his own: riches indeed, could his desires have been as certainly satisfied as they were formed; for the drove consisted of more than one hundred mules, each laden with three hundred pounds' weight in bars of silver. The soldiers who guarded the treasure were easily overcome; but Captain Tetu was wounded in the battle. Yet now the treasure was won it could not be secured, for the victorious possessors of the prize were compelled, on account of its weight, to conceal by far the greater part of it in holes under the earth, or beneath shallow waters. For the present they resolved to return by the way they had come; and once more retraced their steps through the woods, where the French officer was obliged to stay, finding himself disabled by his

wounds from going onward. Here some of his men remained with him, and one was lost or missing in the woods.

Drake and his company travelled forward to meet the pinnaces ; but on arriving at the appointed place soon found cause for astonishment and dismay. No pinnaces were to be seen, but in their stead seven Spanish ships floating in the distance ! At the sight of these not a doubt remained on their minds but that the Spaniards had received some information of their plan on *Nombre de Dios*, and that these ships had been sent forth to intercept their return with the treasure. The pinnaces they concluded had been taken, and the torture used, to learn from the crews where the frigate and the ship had been left, in order that they might next surprise and capture them.

Thus did the followers of Drake, as they now stood on a hostile shore from which there was no escape, look on the Spanish ships riding before their view, and give themselves up for lost.

Never, in any the most trying moments of his life, was the firmness, the presence of mind, or the hardy enterprise of Drake more conspicuous than in this scene of apparent hopeless disaster. By a train of the clearest arguments (for he had that greatness in his courage which preserves the mind calm, and free from all embarrassment in peril, so that reason loses nothing of her power) he convinced them that it was morally impossible the pinnaces could be taken, the men tortured and examined, and the Spanish ships sent forth to secure the English frigate, in the short space of time that had intervened since they had parted on that very shore from their ship-mates ; so that it was still possible they might reach

the vessel before their enemies could become her master.

The men, for the moment, were silenced by these arguments; yet nothing but the resources of a mind like Drake's could have instantaneously suggested the means of attempting the very possibility he had so strongly asserted. To a less fertile genius, the thing must have appeared hopeless under any view in which it was considered—they could not travel overland towards that part of the coast where the frigate had been left, for barrier mountains and impenetrable woods lay between them and it. They could not pass deep rivers or even venture on turbulent seas, for they had no boat; and to return towards *Nombre de Dios*, whilst the country alarmed would be in arms against them, must lead to certain death. Yet Drake, whilst his people saw nothing but these evils and their own despair, observed with a glance of the eye the trees that were slowly and idly floating down the river, borne along with the current towards the shore; and in these he saw deliverance.

With a countenance enlivened by the most confident and cheerful expression, he asked "Who would accompany him to sea, on the raft he was about to form with those timbers?" Nothing is more decisive in its effect than the hope, however slight, that suddenly visits despair. The most animated feelings now succeeded to the listlessness of despondence, and all hands and hearts were eager to help their gallant captain in the construction of his raft, that was to bear him and a few of his most determined followers on this perilous attempt. The raft was quickly formed; a rudder contrived to steer it; and, ingenious in ex-

pedients, an old biscuit-sack was converted into a sail, fitted to the light body of a small tree by way of mast. Drake now chose three of his most expert and resolute followers; and giving those he left on the shore the firmest assurance, that if he survived he would return as their deliverer from peril, he prayed God to calm the seas, so that his raft might ride in safety, and straightway embarked himself and his last hope on this precarious stay.

For six hours, such was the danger of their situation, the sea continually washed over them; and whilst in the hollow of the wave they were frequently up to the chest in water; long they could not have escaped death, which, on any sudden turn of the wind upsetting the raft, must have been inevitable, had not Providence interfered to save them. With the Almighty the wing of the raven became as strong and as swift as that of the eagle, to do his behests in the preservation of a prophet: even so was the fragile raft of Drake rendered as much a vessel of safety, as if it had been formed from the oaks of England, shaped and fitted with the most consummate art, and armed with the thunders of her artillery and the strength of her bravest sons. The pinnaces—those very pinnaces considered as lost to the enemy—appeared in sight; but forced by the wind, that now rose towards nightfall, to a contrary course, they ran for shelter behind a projecting point of land. There Drake ran his raft ashore also, and praising God who had thus conducted him in safety through the stormy waters, he rejoined his vessels, and soon after received his whole company, with such part of the treasure as they had been able to bear off, though it was inconsiderable when compared with what was



left behind. And now the generosity of Drake's character was fully displayed ; for so little selfish were his views, that he made an equal division of the spoil taken from his enemies, between his own people and the French allies ; Monsieur Tetu having happily escaped death, and regained his vessel. To Pedro, the chief of the Scymerons, he gave, as a reward for his faithful services, a sword set with diamonds, which the negro greatly desired to possess, but feared to ask on account of its exceeding value. Pedro, delighted with this act of munificence, which he declared would (by presenting it to his own king) enable him to obtain the highest rank and honours, insisted on presenting the captain with some bars that he had secured in the late exploit ; but Drake, though he at length yielded to his importunity, refused to appropriate them to himself, but threw them into the common stock, saying, "that where all had shared the danger, there likewise should all in justice share the benefit." Thus have we the strongest evidence, that though many of the envious amongst the courtiers of his own time charged Drake's enterprises with the guilt of piracy, a mean spirit of avarice could not have been the motive which prompted him to undertakings so replete with toil and danger ; indeed, on all occasions, he was more mindful of the interests of his followers than of his own.

Returning home, after so many perils, he once more landed on the shores of his native Devon, on the 9th of August, 1573 : it was on a Sunday, and though during the time of divine service, such was the desire of the people of Plymouth to see the man who had done so much honour to their county, that most of them ran out of church to meet him with

the warmest congratulations on his way from the harbour.

Drake's return to England was never contemplated by a mind so active as his as a final repose from his toils ; on the contrary, it was in order to mature his plans, and to gather strength to execute them, that he now sought the countenance of his friends, that their interest at court might obtain for him a full commission from the queen, to sail an English ship in those unknown seas, whose distant view from the heights to which he had been conducted by the Scymerons, inspired the prayer to the Almighty wherein he begged a blessing to accomplish his designs. Many causes, however, operated to retard his undertaking ; for, like Columbus, he found princes sceptical, and envy rife. Such, indeed, was the fame he had already acquired, that many were more disposed to pluck away than to add to his laurels ; and those whose natural dullness and coldness of feeling rendered them dead to all the high hopes and vigorous imaginations of the brave and the great, had neither the faculty nor the disposition to comprehend his designs, and treated them therefore with indifference or ridicule.

So many obstacles might retard but could not conquer the genius of Drake ; a genius which was far beyond that sort of talent which plays brilliantly on the surface of things, like a sunbeam on the waters, but has neither endurance nor vital heat in itself. Drake knew well what were his own capabilities ; and if the world gave him present credit for them or not was to him a matter of indifference ; since no man ever more eminently possessed that wisdom which is content to work by patience ; to sow the seed in the

certainly that sooner or later the harvest will appear, without standing to watch its growth with an irritable spirit, if the blade is slow in rising or in bursting into light.

Great must have been the obstacles he had to contend with at home, since it was not till the fall of the year 1577 that he once more quitted the shores of England, on that expedition which has given him a fame that will live as long as the globe he encircled shall itself endure. Though this enterprise was undertaken with the queen's sanction, it does not appear she took any share of the expense of the outfit; and here we find another instance of Drake valuing his gold and silver only as it served him to carry forward his great and immediate plans; for the ships, five in number, were equipped at his cost, assisted by the other private adventurers who joined in the design. These equipments were made with an eye to the dignity of the nation which our great naval captain was to represent in his own person in far and distant lands. He took with him, therefore, costly furniture, rich apparel, a princely service of plate, and a band of the most skilful musicians.

The seas once more received him; but as if he were never to find rest on their bosom, so fearful was the storm that presently arose, he was driven back on shore with considerable damage. Yet the seas Drake treated as he did his envious adversaries, for he was neither repulsed by their opposition nor scared by their tumult, but ventured forth again in the hope of better fortune; and this he soon found, for the winds became favourable, and his voyage for some time was as prosperous as he could desire. On the 27th of the same month they came in sight of the Isle of

Mogador, on the coast of Barbary, where, finding a convenient harbour for the purpose, Drake, now Admiral of the fleet, erected one pinnacle out of several he had ready prepared in the ships. Here they were observed by the Moors who inhabited the country, and for some days a friendly intercourse was held between them and the English, which was at length, however, broken by the infidels. One of the crew seeing the Moors making signs, leapt on shore alone; he was instantly made prisoner, and carried up the country; when it appeared that he had been seized from some apprehension that Drake was in command of certain Portuguese vessels, and had come thither to observe the coast previous to an invasion. This prisoner was afterwards released; and the Admiral sufficiently satisfied himself in the visit he paid to the coast, by taking many Spanish vessels. They then touched at Cape Blanc, where the inhabitants came forward to traffic for fresh water, being in great need of it at that moment on account of the dryness of the season. Drake generously relieved their distresses, and would take nothing they offered in return. They next proceeded to Mayo, one of the Cape de Verd islands, where they found the people so extremely shy of them, that they ran away as the English approached, and would neither traffic with, nor come near them; but the country abounding with figs, grapes, hens, &c., they failed not to obtain plentiful supplies for the ships. Soon after they passed St Jago, an island in which the Portuguese had gained a footing; and where they had treated the natives with so much cruelty, that many were driven into the most mountainous and rocky parts to seek shelter from their oppressors.

Quitting these islands, the fleet drew near the line, where calms and tempests for some time retarded their progress. Soon after they neared the coast of the Brazils. The inhabitants, observing the ships from the shore, commenced their accustomed magical rites, for the purpose of raising such a storm as would prevent their landing, and sink them into the depths of the sea. The barbarians made great fires, and offered sacrifices to the spirit of the tempest; who on this occasion did not accept them, for the winds slept, and the seas continued unruffled, so that no mischief ensued.

On the 7th of April, however, without any invocation, the lightning, thunder, and rain, caused so fearful a storm, that for some time Drake apprehended he had lost in it the ship called the *Christopher*; but on the 11th she joined the fleet again, and the place where the reunion of the vessels was effected he named Cape Joy, in remembrance of that deliverance. To trace the various islands and lands on which the Admiral touched during this adventurous voyage, with some account, however brief, of the inhabitants and natural productions of each, would instead of a slight notice require a lengthened chapter. And as the whole of this part of his history may be found so fully detailed in the voyages of the time, it would be presumptuous to venture upon the subject after them.

At length Drake entered the river Plate; but there so violent was the tempest which assailed him, that the destruction of the whole fleet seemed inevitable. In this extremity, anxious to preserve the life of the Admiral, Captain Thomas, of the *Elizabeth*, whose vessel was the lightest, prevailed with him

to go on board that ship, and running her into the bay dropped anchor, and here she remained till after the storm. Not finding the harbour so convenient as they expected, on the 15th of May they left it for another, and Drake sent Captain Winter southward, to look after those ships still missing, and sailed himself northward; when meeting fortunately with one vessel, he bore it company to the rest of the fleet; but no other could be found.

## LETTER XXVIII.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

Drake on shore at an Island near the Mainland—Descried by the Natives—They traffic—Drake sails towards the South Seas in search of Vessels that are missing—Sportive competition with Oliver the Gunner—Fatal consequences and Affray—Drake awes the Natives—Transaction with Thomas Doughtie—Drake's Course along the Shores of Peru—Goes to Mucho—Quarrels with Inhabitants; receives a Wound in the Eye—Drops Anchor in Philipps' Bay—Receives a friendly Indian—Flagrant instance of Spanish brutality—Enters the Harbour of Cippo—The Spaniards rush out upon the Crew—Act of cruelty—Arrival at Lima—Drake resolves on the discovery of a Passage from the Pacific to the North Atlantic—Severe Sufferings from change of Climate—Drake encourages his Men—A Barbarian ventures near the Ship in his Canoe—The Natives consider Drake and his Followers as Gods—Drake endeavours to prevent them—He prays and sings Hymns with his Crew—High Honours paid to the Admiral; the Natives place on him the Insignia of Hiebob—The Admiral at length steers for the Moluccas—Touches at Terrenata, where he is received by the King—The King, his Counsellors, and Courtiers—Visit of the Chinese Nobleman—His History—Sails to the Celebes—January 9th, 1580, Drake and his Crew in their greatest danger; they run on a Rock—Drake causes his Crew to prepare for Death—Providential Escape—Return to England—Elizabeth dines on board his Ship the *Pelican*; she Knights him—Jealousy of Sir Bernard Drake—Quarrel with Sir Francis about his Arms—The Queen appoints Drake, Frobisher, and Hawkins in command—Drake attacks the Towns of St. Jago, St. Domingo, Carthagena,

and St. Augustine in Florida—Sends a Flag of Truce to St. Domingo by a Negro Boy—The Boy murdered—Drake requires Justice—1588, Spanish Armada—Drake's last Voyage, 1595—Sails to the West Indies—Death of Hawkins—Drake's friend, Brute Browne, killed by the Spaniards—The Admiral swears to avenge his Death—Fulfil his purposes—Storms Nombre de Dios—Dies at Sea January 9th, 1597—Buried in the Ocean—His Character and Genius.

*Vicarage, Tavistock, November 15th, 1832.*

SOON after the events lately mentioned, Drake and his followers, whilst going on shore at an island near the mainland, were descried by the barbarians of the country, who made signs to them as if they were disposed for friendly traffic. On seeing this, the Admiral sent forward a boat with many toys and knives as presents, in the hope to conciliate them. Two of them advanced for a short space, but would not venture near the English, who, in consequence of this shyness, were obliged to suspend their gifts to a long pole which they fixed in the earth, and immediately after retired. The savages soon availed themselves of such bounty, and, on their part, left on the pole a plume of feathers and a carved bone, as gifts of honour from their king.

Drake, pleased to find them thus amicably disposed, ventured to draw nigh, upon which the natives drew up in a line on a hill, and bowing to those quarters of the heavens whence arose the sun and moon, they thus let the strangers know they were received in peace. The accounts given, in the voyages of Drake, of the customs of these Indians, are replete with interest, but too numerous to be here stated in detail. They practised a more noble kind of idolatry



than that of worshipping blocks of wood or stone, as they believed, from the splendour of their aspect, that the planets were gods that had power to overrule the destinies of men. Having no canoes, they could never quit their islands to reach so far as the mainland, which, in this part at least, was uninhabited by man; for, on Drake sailing thither, the birds (unaccustomed to the sight of human beings, and never having known their snares) did not fly from but came to him, even as the feathered race had done to Adam in Paradise. The poor Indians of the islands he found as docile as the birds, and almost as simple in their habits: they principally lived on the raw flesh of the seal, not using fire in the preparation of their food. Their notions of friendship and affection were of the strongest kind, and this Drake experienced, for on giving a cap to one of the natives he was so transported with the generosity of the Admiral that, to express his sense of the favour, he thrust his arrow into his own leg, and let the blood run on the earth in token of fidelity.

At length Drake set sail towards the South Seas, and soon after dropped anchor in a convenient bay in order to break up the *Christopher*. He now also became anxious to determine in what manner it would be most desirable to act respecting the Portuguese prize, which he had lost sight of in the great storm, as he could not endure the idea of proceeding and leaving his fellow-voyagers, who were in her, exposed to so many dangers alone. After offering up prayers to Almighty God that he would send a blessing on his endeavour, he set sail in search of the vessel, and on the very next day had the happiness to meet with his companions near Port Julian. Drake, in order to

refresh his associates, steered into this port, and went on shore with some of them to seek fresh water. There he was addressed by two of the people, a race sufficiently formidable in manners and appearance, and of a character alike treacherous and cruel.

The Indians who had accosted Drake seemed disposed to be friendly with him, and even entered into a sportive competition with Oliver the gunner, in shooting their arrows, though theirs did not reach so far as the shafts sent from an English bow. Whilst they were thus amusing themselves another Indian joined them, who seemed less pleased with the strangers than were his companions, to whom he addressed his discourse with much vehemence, in his own tongue. One of Drake's men at this moment attempting to give the angry native a specimen of his skill with the bow, unfortunately broke his bow-string. The Indians immediately fancied he must be disarmed by the accident, and, artfully watching the retreat of the strangers to their boat, discharged their arrows upon them, and wounded the man who had broken the string. He endeavoured to refit the bow with another, but received a second wound in the breast. The gunner Oliver instantly presented his matchlock, but it failed to give fire, and the natives, encouraged by these disasters on the part of the English, discharged upon them a second flight, killed poor Oliver, wounded many, and had not Drake acted with his accustomed calmness and intrepidity, it is probable every man would have been cut off. But he directed them to cover their bodies in their retreat with the targets they carried for defence; to shift perpetually their position so as to avoid the arrows, and to stop, pick up, and destroy them as they fell. Drake also seized

the gun, which had so unfortunately hung fire in the hands of Oliver, and aiming at the treacherous Indian who had been his death, wounded that savage mortally on the spot. This circumstance effectually changed the fortune of the combat ; for the barbarians, whose numbers had been fearfully increasing, retreated in terror and amazement to their woods, whilst Drake withdrew his men from the scene of action. In a few days, however, he had to perform the melancholy duty of attending the burial of his friend Winter, and some of his people who died of their wounds. He remained in this part of the world, without receiving further molestation, nearly two months longer, the natives having been literally awed into submission by the discharge of a gun.

I pass in silence the remarkable transaction concerning Thomas Doughtie, which took place on board Drake's ship in this obscure quarter of the globe. My reason for doing so is, that I find it impossible to give it so as to make it intelligible in any abridged account, replete as the whole transaction is with mystery and the most contradictory circumstances. In its present state it is so enveloped in obscurity that it defied even the critical examination of Johnson, who declares "it is difficult to form any judgment upon it." But thus much surely may be said with perfect impartiality, that where there is such a want of clear intelligence, we are entitled in a great measure to rest our opinion on the general character of Drake, his known sense of religious duty, and his humanity to his people. Is it therefore likely that a commander governed by principles such as these would have executed Thomas Doughtie, (whatever might have been his crimes) had they been of a nature to admit

his showing mercy? Possibly also in such an obscure part of the globe, where the lives of all depended on discipline and obedience, it might really have been more merciful to the many to punish one, for the sake of example, than by an ill-timed lenity to spare him, and thus remove the salutary fear of the worst consequences, should any attempt to mutiny be meditated in the ships.

After a variety of perilous adventures amongst the savages, on whose shores he occasionally landed, Drake at length entered the Pacific, that vast expanse of ocean on which no vessel bearing the British flag had hitherto sailed ; an achievement reserved for him, the happy success of which had been the great object of his ambition. But he was again destined to suffer another and severe trial ; for so fearful a tempest arose that the destruction of the whole fleet appeared inevitable. During the space of fifty-two days the ships were incessantly driven and tossed, without the power to spread a sail, from one quarter of the ocean to another, not knowing in which they should at last find a watery grave. Here they lost company with the *Elizabeth*, and that vessel did not afterwards rejoin them, though, fortunately escaping wreck, she found her way in safety to England.

For some time after the violence of the tempest had abated, Drake steered his ship from island to island in search of fresh water ; till on the 30th of October he steered for the rendezvous of his fleet. Thence, laden with a store of provisions, he continued his course along the shores of Peru ; but not finding his vessels as he expected, nor any harbourage that promised safety, he made no stay until he reached Mucho, an island thronged by such of the Indians

as, having suffered every kind of cruelty under the Spanish yoke, had fled thither from the continent for refuge. The savages appearing willing to entertain the strangers in friendly traffic, on the next day they ventured on shore for water ; but they soon found how little sincerity there had been in their apparent cordiality ; for two of the seamen going forward with the water vessels were immediately put to death. This was the signal for a general assault, and some hundreds of the barbarians, having crouched behind the surrounding rocks in order to conceal their purpose, in a moment started up, discharged their arrows on those of the crew who had not yet quitted the boat, and wounded every man on board.

The sea ran in such tumultuous waves, that to return to the ship was almost as hazardous as it would have been to land on the shore. Drake received a wound from one of the arrows, which pierced nearly to the brain, and another struck him under the eye. But notwithstanding the danger and the absence of the surgeon, who was in one of the parted ships, by the mercy of Providence his life and the lives of his wounded followers were preserved ; a circumstance little less than miraculous, and evidently showing that when those ordinary means by which men are both permitted and enjoined to heal the injuries of the body fail, the arm of God is not shortened, and that he can extend it towards his afflicted creatures in the most marked and merciful manner.

Shortly after Drake dropped anchor in Philipps' Bay, where, receiving an Indian on board of a better nature than those of Mucho, he so far won upon him by his kindness, that the stranger offered to become his pilot to a spot where all his wants should be

supplied. Here he succeeded also in the capture of a Spanish vessel richly laden with wines, stores, jewels, and gold. The Indian pilot was rewarded and returned safe to his people, having, during the time he was with Drake, exhibited that mild and docile temper so natural to his race before the Spaniards hardened their hearts and roused their passions, by the cruelty and treachery with which they treated them, in order to make them discover to their conquerors those mines of gold where they were destined to labour like slaves.

. A flagrant instance of Spanish brutality, that occurred shortly after, acted powerfully on the mind of Drake, and made him feel, if possible, a yet more determined enmity against the whole nation. About the end of December he entered the harbour of Cippo, where these men held possession of the town, and of many Indians who were no better than captives in their service. Observing the English land on the coast they rushed out in an overwhelming body, accompanied by their naked slaves, each of the latter armed with arrows formed of green wood ; since such was their dread of the Indian captives that they allowed them no weapons but what should be cut for some immediate service ; disarming and maltreating them when the labours of the day were at an end. Finding opposition against such numbers would be madness, Drake and his men, saving one, retired hastily to the boats ; when the unfortunate man left behind was seized on the spot and shot by the Spaniards, who, hurrying with his body to a rock, whence the savage exultation of their victory might be seen, cut off his head and hands, and tore out his heart in the face of his countrymen, first insisting

that the Indians should discharge their arrows over the body, and thus disarm themselves.

The next place at which the Admiral touched was Tarrapaca ; where, finding a Spaniard asleep, with many bars of silver, weighing about four thousand dollars, by his side, they relieved him of his burthen without interrupting his repose, and left him to wonder, when he should awake, by whom he had been deprived of a care that more often breaks the slumber of the possessor than contributes to its security. Another Spaniard they met in their way was employed in driving certain Peruvian sheep, the llamas there used as beasts of burthen, laden with bars of silver. These they also relieved of their load, taking all the spoil with more than ordinary pleasure, as it was considered a lawful reprisal for the Spanish cruelties they had so lately witnessed. The treasure was conveyed in safety to the ship.

Sailing thence they came to Lima, where, grown confident and even daring by success, they steered directly into the harbour, and to their astonishment met with no offer of resistance. But the name of Drake was become as appalling as his own cannon ; and the Spaniards, cruel to a feeble enemy, were dastardly before a brave one ; so that they now actually suffered the Admiral to take possession of one of their ships richly laden with gold, without the slightest attempt at defence ; and, had he been as evil-minded as themselves, they would with equal submission have suffered him to burn it. A second great prize was the *Cacafuego*, wherein they took gold, jewels, fourteen chests of rials of plate, and such other treasure, that it was the work of some days to transfer it to the English ship. Content,

even satiated with spoil, and despairing of finding the vessels from which they had parted company in the great storm, Drake now began to turn his thoughts homeward ; but ere he sailed thither, he wished to accomplish an object which should be of incalculable benefit to his country—the discovery of a northern passage from the Pacific to the Atlantic. To prepare for this enterprise, it became necessary that the ship should undergo some repair, and receive a fresh supply of water. The Admiral steered accordingly to a convenient bay in the Island of Caines, and as good fortune at this time seemed to meet him at every turn, here also they fell in with and captured a vessel laden with rich silks and stuffs.

But an uninterrupted continuance of prosperity is seldom the lot of public or of private men ; and Drake and his crew were soon to feel a reverse which was indeed calculated to give them a practical lesson of how little worth are riches in the extremity of human distress ; that some power, greater than that of fortune, is alone worthy the trust of a wise man, and should, therefore, be alone the object of his hopes. The first suffering they had to endure was a change of climate ; for, having sailed about fourteen hundred leagues, they found the cold so intense that the ropes of the ship became frozen, and it required six men to perform the duties usually accomplished by half the number. As they advanced, the vital heat of the sun seemed entirely to forsake them, and their hearts became cold and cheerless as their limbs. A melancholy discouragement seized on all the crew, and in this torpid state they were in danger of sinking before the perils that beset them, without a struggle to overcome such accumulated difficulties.



But nothing could move the spirit of Drake to give way before circumstances, however adverse their nature ; and, blending the kindness of his generous disposition with the authority of his station, he reminded his people in the most impressive manner of the never-failing providence of God, and with a cheerful voice and countenance encouraged them to labour, so that they might deserve the assistance of a power without whose aid their efforts would be vain. Onward they sailed, till at length they found a convenient harbour, and dropped anchor on the 17th of June on an unknown shore. Nothing could be more cheerless than the prospect before them. The land was barren, the trees leafless, and the natives a set of savages, who seemed to look on them with wonder and fear.

One of these barbarians ventured in his canoe near the ship, and having pronounced with solemn gestures an oration in his own tongue, which, of course, could not be understood, he presented the English with a crown of black feathers, and a basket made of rushes filled with herbs. It was here absolutely necessary that the crew should land in order to stop a leak which the ship had sprung at sea. Experience had taught Drake not to depend on the peace-offerings of savages ; he caused, therefore, in the first instance, a fortification of stones to be raised on the shore ; within this he pitched the tents to accommodate his people. The work thus speedily accomplished, to a nation so wild and ignorant as the poor savages in the common arts of life, seemed little less than miraculous ; and they now came down in crowds to worship the Admiral and his men, as if they had been gods. Drake, however, had too deep

a sense of what was due to God to countenance this error ; probably also he might remember the conduct of Paul and Barnabas, who, when the Greeks would have sacrificed to them as Jupiter and Mercurius, rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying, "We also are men of like passions with you." Drake made them comprehend by signs and gestures that he would not receive their worship ; and causing them to throw aside their bows and arrows, gave them linen and necessities, showing in what way these things would become useful.

The savages, however, could not so easily be prevailed with to consider the wonderful strangers as men of earthly mould like themselves. Gratefully receiving the presents of the Admiral, they retired to some distance from the tents, where they set up their voices in loud and doleful shoutings ; whilst the women, with frantic gestures, commenced those fearful rites so common with the ancient idolatrous nations : tearing their bodies and their cheeks till the blood ran down them, or dashing themselves against rocks and stones in homage to the gods before their eyes, for gods they would persist in thinking the English must be, who had honoured their shores by coming down from the clouds to set their feet upon them.

Drake, shocked at such inhumanities, which he had no power wholly to prevent, commanded his own men to kneel down on the spot ; there, with eyes and hands upraised, he caused them to pray aloud to the true God, in the hope that these poor savages might be convinced, by the humility of the action, that there was a Power to be worshipped high above the heavens, and that they should not, therefore, bow

down to creatures who moved but on the earth. After this Drake opened his bible,<sup>1</sup> read some chapters aloud to the crew, and closing the book desired them to join with him in singing a psalm. This scene, touching in itself, greatly charmed the savages, and inspired the whole crew with feelings of the deepest reverence. The hardy seamen, who had spirits so bold to meet danger, to combat their enemies with undaunted courage, whom neither perils by land nor sea could move, thus humbly acknowledging their entire dependence on God, and singing his praises with the voice that had so often mingled its rough sounds with those of the gale, was a spectacle calculated to affect all who were present, and no doubt the sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving so heartily offered was not made in vain.

Drake and his men, having produced this powerful impression on the natives, soon experienced its effect. In a few days the king of the country announced his intention of coming to visit the Admiral. The English stood prepared in case of treachery ; but soon found they had nothing to fear. A servant of state came before the royal savage, bearing his black wooden sceptre, decorated with a chain of bone, and two crowns of black feathers, with a bundle of herbs like those solemnly presented to the Admiral. The king himself next appeared, attired in a rabbit-skin jacket, with a cap on his head, woven with the feathers of various birds, and decorated with ornaments carved in bone. His attendants brought fish and herbs, in baskets so beautifully and closely woven that they would contain water ; these being nothing less than

<sup>1</sup> Drake's bible is still carefully preserved at Buckland Abbey, about seven miles from Tavistock.

sacred offerings for the strangers. The sceptre-bearer made a speech which nobody could understand; and, even as it is in many instances of speech-making in our own days, it was deemed not less excellent on that account. The speech concluded, the orator, king, and all the retinue of royalty, commenced dancing and singing with solemn delight; so that it was quite evident to the English, who understood action much better than words, that nothing but honours and kindness were intended towards them and their commander. These high ceremonies finished with the coronation of the Admiral, who, with the consent of the legitimate king and of all his people, was declared, with the honours of feathers, bone chains, rabbit-skin jacket, and all other insignia of royalty, to be *Hiebob* of the nation, in one universal shout. Drake, however, did not choose to consider himself a king abroad, whilst he had a queen at home; and so receiving the wooden sceptre of Hiebob in the name of Elizabeth, he took nothing from her new domain but a stock of such provisions as he could get; and expressed his hopes, in return for the generosity with which these were supplied, that so harmless and confiding a people might indeed hereafter feel the blessing of becoming the subjects of Elizabeth, by being made members of the true Church.

The utmost goodwill and regard subsisted between the English and the natives, though it was with extreme difficulty the former could prevail with them to desist from their barbarous custom of tearing their flesh in token of reverence and duty. Drake now ventured to inspect the interior of the country, in company with the king; and, to his surprise, found it to be far better than he had even imagined it possible

to be. It was very fruitful, abounding with deer and rabbits of so extraordinary a kind that their furs might very well be considered as a dress fit for the majesty of the land. It was with extreme regret that these friendly natives parted from their new masters, whose kindness and gentle rule had inspired them with a warmth of attachment seldom equalled in civilized countries, and still more rare in those where civilization is unknown.

The Admiral at length steered his course for the Moluccas, and in sixty-seven days came within sight of land. On the 30th of September he neared some islands, where he soon met with a very different reception from that he had so lately experienced. Not liking the natives, he did not tarry longer than necessity required; but continuing his course, on the 3rd of November he touched at Terrenata, where he was received by the king, whom Fuller calls 'a true pagan gentleman.' This king appeared dressed in state; he was of a noble person, of a mild, commanding countenance, and spoke with gentleness to all around him. He was attended by a number of old men with flowing beards, attired in white dresses; these acted as his counsellors, and had that venerable and grave appearance which inspires a feeling of reverence due alike to wisdom and to years. This 'true pagan gentleman' welcomed Drake with every mark of honour; and as a proof of the good opinion he entertained concerning him, he told the Admiral that "they were both of one religion, since neither of them worshipped stocks or stones as did the Portuguese." Drake was prevailed with to visit him in his castle, where he found three score old men, who attended upon the king as his regular council of

state ; one of these performed the part of interpreter, a necessary office in a place where much of the accumulated wealth of the sovereign depended on his commerce with foreigners. Here Drake observed that everything was magnificent ; cloth of gold, jewels, and riches, dazzled his eyes at every turn ; and the very fan which the chief slave held in his hand appeared set with diamonds and sapphires. The castle had been erected by the Portuguese whilst they were masters of the town, though they did not long hold it in possession ; for so great had been their tyranny that the natives rose and drove them out. At the court of this prince the Admiral met with an adventure too remarkable to be passed in silence. It was a visit from a Chinese nobleman, who, having seen him with the king, came on board his vessel shortly after attended by an interpreter.

The Chinese, before making known the object of his visit, begged to inform Drake of the circumstances of his history which had occasioned his quitting the 'Celestial Empire,' to wander forth in so remote a quarter of the earth. He was a native of China ; had been accused of a capital offence, of which he knew himself to be innocent ; but not having sufficient proof of his innocence to satisfy the jealous court of his own country, he begged the emperor to banish instead of putting him on his trial, which would have been the same thing as sentencing him to death ; and this exile he proposed should continue till such time as, by travelling abroad, he might be enabled, by Divine assistance, to prove his innocence in bringing back to China some information of such an extraordinary nature, that it could not fail to be honourable and useful to the empire. His terms

were granted, and with this object in view for three long years had the Chinese nobleman wandered, like other travellers, in search of the wonderful in various quarters of the world; and not till he had met with Drake did he see any likelihood of satisfying the expectations of his imperial master. He now, therefore, told Drake, would he but make him acquainted with his adventures, the relation of them would afford such a store for his memory, that he could not fail, on imparting it at court, to procure a full pardon from the greatest emperor on the face of the globe. Drake gladly complied with this request, and, assisted by the interpreter, told all the 'import of his travel's history' to the delighted exile; whose gratitude was so warm at hearing such wonders that, as the only adequate return he could make to the narrator of them, he offered to become his guide, and to secure him an honourable reception at the high court of the Celestial Empire itself, would he but steer his course that way.

Drake's mind, however, was bent on a homeward voyage; so leaving his history to be recorded by the Chinese, after the manner of his country (and no doubt a curious work it must have been), he bade him adieu; and after touching at more than one island, sailed to the Celebes, where a contrary wind impeded his course, and he became entangled by the numerous shallows that were found amongst the contiguous islands. Here they beat about till the 9th day of January, 1580, when, in the midst of smooth seas, a favourable gale, and in the full confidence they had at last attained a free passage for their barque, Drake and his crew in an instant found themselves in more imminent danger than they had

encountered during all the various trials of their adventurous career ; for, whilst sailing without even a suspicion of danger, the ship struck on a shoal with such force that all human aid was vain.

Drake, who never quailed whilst there was a chance left that, by the boldness of his example and the manly exertion of his authority, some relief might be obtained, now saw no hope but with God, to whom he looked, in this instance, more for eternal than present mercy on himself and his people. Death, and that immediate, was before their eyes. Determined, however hopeless, to use every effort, he caused the pumps to be plied, and the vessel was found free from any leak. His next thought was, if possible, to discover if there might not be some spot where they might moor the boat, and thence drag the ship into deep water. In this emergency Drake would trust no one with the soundings but himself. He threw the line that was to become the hope of life, or the certainty of death, with a firm hand ; but so deep were the waters that no anchorage could be found even close to the ship, and it now appeared that the rock on which she had struck started perpendicularly from the sea. Drake's hopes were gone, for well did he know it needed but the slightest breath of wind to lift the keel of the vessel, when one blow more must be the last. This discovery of a fathomless deep, that would have plunged his men into despair, Drake did not immediately make known to them ; he paused for a moment's reflection ; but found no comfort in his own bosom, since escape from so many perils seemed impossible. In a little while the ship would be a wreck ; if the men attempted to reach the land in their boat they would be swamped, or did



they gain it a worse fate would be theirs ; they would be murdered by the savages, for a more fierce and cruel race than those who inhabited the surrounding shores was nowhere to be found.

Wishing his people, therefore, to meet death as it became brave and Christian men, Drake called them around him, and with that impressive solemnity of feeling which his deep sense of religion never failed to inspire, he commanded the sacrament to be administered to all, and that all should on their bended knees humbly and devoutly join in one common prayer for deliverance. This done, and strengthened by a brief though hearty repentance towards God, he once more earnestly enjoined them to labour, that by so doing they might speedily lighten the ship. Six pieces of ordnance were first thrown overboard ; bars of gold and silver, those riches for which they had toiled and bled, went next to enrich the caves and treasure-houses of the boundless deep. This labour ended, there was no more to do but wait in patience for that moment when the present awful suspense should end in death. But now that every human effort was unavailing, when man had done his little all, and his prayers had come up to the throne of mercy, God showed Himself 'mighty to save ;' as if he had audibly said to every ear—as the event proved he did to every heart—"Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord ;" for scarcely had their last hope deserted them, when the wind, which had hitherto blown so strongly against the side of the vessel, as she leaned towards the sea, that it held her upright against the rock, suddenly dropped ; and the tide being then low, she reeled—in another moment she was in deep water, and cleared from

that perilous rock which must have dashed her in pieces: Drake and his crew had passed from the certainty of death to life and hope again. How few, as they did, have tasted the cup of bitterness thus suddenly changed to one of blessing and of joy! Yet scarcely even then could they trust it. So deep was the impression of this escape from death on all the crew, that for some time they dared not venture to hoist a sail, but let the vessel creep along, as it were, amidst the shoals and shallows with a degree of fear that kept them constantly on the watch.

After mentioning an event so interesting as this, I shall not dwell on those of minor import, which occurred at the several islands where the Admiral touched during the remainder of his voyage. At length he advanced towards the Cape of Good Hope; on the 15th of August passed the Tropics, and on the 26th of September arrived once more at Plymouth; where he found, by the variation of the several climates through which he had sailed, that he had lost one day in his reckoning, having in all been absent from England two years, ten months, and a few days.

Drake, notwithstanding the wealth he had lost by throwing it into the sea, brought home sufficient to be the possessor of great riches; and his fame was now so established, that he was the delight and wonder of the kingdom; wherever he came the multitude thronged around and greeted him with the most enthusiastic expressions of admiration and regard. Elizabeth, who might well be proud of her adventurous Admiral, on his bringing the *Pelican*, which had so long spread her wings over the wilderness of the wild waters, into the harbour near Greenwich, did him the favour of a royal visit; feasted,

with her court, on board his ship, and there conferred upon him the honour of knighthood; an honour then rare, and never was it more truly deserved or more boldly won.

Drake, however, was one of those characters who can gain nothing by any external mark of distinction; his own untitled name would have been sufficient honour for him in his day, and posterity estimates no man by his titles or his bearings. Yet so much did our great Admiral underrate his own merits that he was desirous to assume the coat of arms of Sir Bernard Drake, a Devonshire knight, to whose family Francis Drake believed himself to be related by a younger branch. If our hero is to be blamed for feeling anxious about a thing so infinitely below *his* consideration, what must be said of Sir Bernard, who took high offence at what he deemed an act of presumption in one, in the poverty and obscurity of whose birth he was himself mean enough to see more cause for shame, than honour in the genius, the worth, and the eminent services of the individual that would hereafter rank him amongst the most glorious of his country's sons? It is said by tradition, that so bitterly did the silly Sir Bernard resent this affront about his arms, that he travelled up to London to complain of it; and, whilst heated in quarrel on the subject, gave Sir Francis a box on the ear! The news was soon carried to the queen, who speedily devised the means of justly and severely mortifying the pride of Sir Bernard in the most tender point.

Elizabeth, fond of allegory, (and in her age it was the fashion in all things, serious or trifling) now gave her gallant Admiral a coat of arms of her own invention: Sable, a fess wavy between two pole-stars

argent. For the crest: a ship under ruff, drawn round a globe with a cable rope by a hand out of the clouds, with this motto over it, '*Auxilio divino*,' and this under it, '*Sic parvis magna*.' In the rigging of the vessel the queen suspended a *wyvern by the heels*, that heraldic bird being the crest of the proud Sir Bernard, and the cause of his petty jealousy and quarrels with Sir Francis.

Drake found, in more instances than the one above cited, that though he had compassed the world he could not escape the effects of those malignant passions which are everywhere found in it; from the Indian who in savage society knocks down his enemy and scalps him, to the European in more polished life who calls his fellow man his *friend*, whilst he often aims a secret blow at his feelings, or his reputation, when he can no longer injure him in his fortune. In Drake's time it was a custom, on receiving the honour of knighthood, to give presents in money to such courtiers as might belong to the household of the queen. Sir Francis offered his gold as freely as he had gained it; but many, not otherwise noted for nice or scrupulous feelings, indulged their envy and malice by the refusal of his gifts, affecting to consider them the fruits of nothing better than a pirate's success in a lawless career.

The Queen, however, judged more kindly of her Admiral; and joined him in command with other naval officers of eminence, Frobisher and Hawkins. Drake well repaid her confidence in his prowess, by taking the towns of St. Jago, St. Domingo, Carthagena, and St. Augustine, in Florida, from the Spaniards. During the attack on St. Domingo he had landed a large body of men, and kept possession

of the place for several weeks, and sent a flag of truce (intending to treat with the enemy) by a negro boy. So little did the Spaniard who received the flag respect the law of nations or of humanity, that he stabbed the unfortunate envoy with his own hand on the spot. The poor negro fled; he had strength sufficient to enable him to return to the Admiral; he related the circumstance and instantly expired at his feet. Drake, justly indignant at such an outrage on common humanity, seized a couple of friars who were already his prisoners, and sent them with a strong guard to the spot where the negro boy received his death blow; declaring that unless the murderer was given up to him, he would hang those priests and a couple more each day, till justice should be done. The Spaniards dared not trifle with the English Admiral, who they well knew would be likely to keep his word; the offender was therefore given up, and executed for the crime of murder; Drake obliging the dastardly Spaniards to carry into effect the sentence he had pronounced.

The year 1588 will be ever memorable in the annals of England for the defeat of the Armada; a force which, had it been permitted to succeed, would in all probability have been the means of restoring, at least for a time, the papal power in this kingdom; and it is not unworthy remark that exactly a century after, 1688, the Providence of God was again manifestly extended over this country, the landing of King William becoming the means of preserving to us our Protestant Church and constitution.

The chief command of the English fleet sent forth by Elizabeth against the Spaniards was committed to Lord Howard of Effingham, as Lord High Admiral

of England; Sir Francis Drake was Vice-Admiral, and Hawkins and Frobisher had each an eminent post appointed them in the fleet; which altogether amounted to about one hundred sail. The gallant conduct of Drake in this expedition is known to every reader of history; and so great was the terror of our hero's name, that the Spanish ship commanded by Don Pedro de Valdez yielded, on finding with whom he had ventured on immediate contact. Drake continued chasing such of the vessels as had escaped the fury of battle during three days, till God himself finally defeated the enemies of England, by that fearful storm which sent their fugitive ships, little better than wrecks, back to their own ports.

The last voyage undertaken by Sir Francis was in the year 1595, when Elizabeth, desirous of destroying the power of Spain in the West Indies past remedy, gave Hawkins and Drake command of six of her ships, besides which they had not less than twenty-one of their own. It was intended this expedition should be carried on with the utmost secrecy; a measure of prudence which Drake had never failed observing, when he acted singly, in his former voyages. In the present instance, however, discretion was somewhere wanting; for the king of Spain received information of their plans, and adopted means of defence even before the fleet had quitted the British shores. Sir John Hawkins, a man of considerable merit, unhappily died soon after he was at sea; and Drake, being now left alone in command, steered his course for the coast of Porto Rico, a town in South America, where, whilst the vessel was riding in the road, a shot from the batteries entered the cabin as he was at supper, struck the chair on which he sat,

broke it under him, and killed his friend Brute Browne, whilst Sir Nicholas Clifford, another companion of his table, received a dangerous wound. Drake started up, and looking with sorrow on his fallen friend, exclaimed, "Ah! dear Brute, I could, indeed, mourn for thee, but this is not the hour to subdue my spirit;" and, his heart swelling with indignation more than grief, he took an immediate revenge by capturing and burning two Spanish ships in the very sight of the castle. Thus were the Spaniards made to feel that Drake was still himself in spirit, though his success on the whole fell far short of his former achievements, or of his present hopes and expectations; as he soon found that the inadvertency or the treachery which had betrayed his plans led the way to frustrate them. Notwithstanding this he was successful in his attack on Nombre de Dios, for he stormed and burnt the town. After that event he did nothing of any import; and this change of fortune is said to have had such an effect upon his mind, that it caused his death by bringing on a flux, which in a few hours put a period to his glorious career, near Bella Porta in America, on the 9th of January, 1597. On this point Johnson remarks—"Upon what the conjecture is grounded does not appear; and we may be allowed to hope for the honour of so great a man that it is without foundation; and that he, whom no series of successes could ever betray to vanity or negligence, could have supported a change of fortune without impatience or dejection." It may, however, be observed, though Johnson does not view it in that light, that present vexation of mind, which differs widely from the deep sorrow of a broken heart, might really have been the cause of his death, without any dis-

paragement to the greatness of Drake's character ; since it is well known to medical men of experience that momentary vexation and sudden passion of any description will, in constitutions worn by hardships and varieties of climate, frequently bring on fatal attacks of that very disorder which carried him off in so short a time.

His remains were placed in a leaden coffin, and after the funeral service had been performed with every solemnity, they were lowered into the deep by his sorrowing crew, to whom he had endeared himself as much by his personal attention to their feelings and their wants, as by the example of his courage, perseverance, and generosity. Though Drake was not wholly free, perhaps, from some of those faults which his enemies drew in exaggerated colours, yet take him as a whole, and few public characters have left so fair, so unblemished a name. He was the scourge of the Spaniards, and by the just retribution of Providence they were made to feel that he was such in those very lands where they had acted the most abhorrent crimes to a poor, unenlightened, and (till the Spanish cruelties awakened their worst passions) a harmless race of men, capable of gratitude, and exceedingly docile, had they been led by kind masters instead of being hunted and goaded like wild beasts or slaves. Those who are eager to censure Drake for his piracies on the Spanish settlements in America should remember these things, as well as the base manner in which he was treated by the Viceroy, who was supported in that act by the king of Spain, in the very onset of his career ; when all the fortune, the result of his industry and his toils in his first little barque was lost, not in the chances of an open



and expected warfare, but by an attack the most unsuspected and treacherous. The 'sea divinity,' which prompted him to make reprisals, no doubt was too orthodox in the views of a bold and injured seaman, inured from his earliest years to the habits of the ocean, ever after to be forgotten or laid aside.

But if we view the character of Drake in its loyalty, its national pride, its unshaken bravery and perseverance, its kindness, so blended with a firm exercise of authority; its generosity to his followers; and, above all, in its deep devotional feelings, which neither prosperity nor adversity, nor honours, nor riches (the great corruptor of the human heart), could ever weaken or render even for a moment forgetful of his God; we shall not fail to admire the qualities of his heart as much as we do those of his genius. Both were capacious; and, like his great and kindred spirit, Columbus, he was as humble and merciful as a Christian, as he was celebrated for his skill as a navigator, and for his courage as a man. There is no monument in England to the memory of Sir Francis Drake, but his fame encircles the globe.

## LETTER XXIX.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

Affecting Story of a Widow and her only Son—Old Tale noticed by Baretti; his Journey through Tavistock, and Account of the Weather—The old Woman's Tale repeated by herself to Baretti—Passage from a Letter of Mr. Southey to the Writer—Traditions of Tavistock, and wonderful Tales gleaned amongst the Elders—Joseph Glanville probably collected from the same Source in his day—Story of an old Witch—Heathfield, the favourite Haunt of Devils and Spirits—A Tavistock Psalm-singer's Encounter with the Foul Fiend—Another Story of the Devil, which shows him to be a great Patron of Fiddlers—This last Legend probably a Vestige of the Old Moralities—The Dying Miller, an old Christmas Play, acted here about thirty Years ago—Vestiges of ancient Customs—St. Valentine's Day—Old Customs still occasionally observed—Gloves sent on Easter Day—Old Customs—Lent Crocking; Lines upon—Roasting the Shoe—Superstitious Notions about the Days of the Week—Birth of Children—Twenty-ninth of May much observed in this Town—Garland Day—Garlands, how made—Robin held sacred—Children, their Dress and Sports—Midsummer Eve, ancient Superstition concerning—Vestige of an ancient Custom probably originating with the Tolmen—Cure for the Tooth-ache—Magpie Omens—The Holy Thistle; its properties and beautiful appearance; Superstition concerning—Lucky Omens—New Moon—Superstition of the Bible and the Key—Plants put into Mourning—Subterranean Passage from the Abbey to Fitzford—Discovery at Fitzford—Story of a Ghost that haunted Down House—Old Stories about Lady Howard.

*Vicarage, Tavistock, January 8th, 1833.*

I HAVE heard Mary Colling (who is a most intelligent and exact registrar of all the old tales, traditions, and characters of any note in her native town) tell a very

interesting story concerning a poor woman, formerly of this place, the particulars of which I deem not unworthy mentioning.

Many years ago this poor woman (whose name Mary had forgotten) was left a widow with an only son. She was very fond of the boy, and, as far as her slender means would go, brought him up with more care than persons in her station were generally able to bestow on their children. Whilst he was yet a little fellow, an officer in the navy took a fancy to him on account of his hopeful and affectionate disposition, and persuaded the widow that it would be better to let the lad go to sea than to stay at home and be brought up a labourer or a mechanic. Reluctant to part with her only treasure, yet not wishing to thwart a proposal which she was led to believe would be greatly to his advantage, she let him go, and looked forward with longing hopes to hear good news of her boy. None however came: year after year rolled on, and still she heard nothing. She made many efforts to gain intelligence, but not succeeding, at length concluded he was dead.

Finding the home where she had parted from her son become melancholy, she left the place; and after wandering for some time with a basket on her arm, selling fruit and trifles by which she obtained a livelihood, increasing years made her determine to take up a more fixed way of life again, and she removed to Plymouth. There she now sold fruit in the market as a regular dealer. Having something in her appearance that was venerable, being very neat in dress, civil in speech, and just in her dealings, the old market-woman became a favourite, and never wanted customers.

Many vessels put into Plymouth harbour, so that strangers were often frequenters of the market. Amongst these was a young man, dressed in a sailor's jacket, who was a constant customer to the poor fruit-woman. For several days he renewed his visits to her basket, and at last, fixing his eyes upon her with great earnestness, he said, as the tears started into them, "I like to buy of you, good woman, because I had once a poor old mother who, as I well remember, was much like you ; but she is dead and gone."

The woman looked up full in his face, the fruit she was about to sell fell from her hand, as she exclaimed, "Good God ! and if I had a son as old as you alive he would be your fellow, for you are like what his father was at your age. My boy had a mark on his forehead that came from a hurt he got by a fall that he had when a child."

"Was it like this ?" said the sailor, as he took off his hat and pushed aside his curling hair.

The woman could give no answer, so much was she overpowered by her feelings on finding the dead alive in her own long-lost son. She dropped down on the spot, was carried from it with the greatest anxiety by her child and the neighbours, and on her senses being restored poured forth a blessing on her son, thanking God she had lived to see him once more ; and now declared she had not a wish left but to die when so happy, and be in heaven. Her prayer, fervently offered, was no doubt mercifully accepted : in a few days the young man, deeply sorrowing and attended by some of the ship's crew, who showed a generous sympathy in his filial grief, followed the remains of his affectionate mother to the churchyard in Plymouth, where they rest in peace. By what

train of circumstances the youth had fancied her to be no more, so that she had received no news from him for so many years, I do not know, nor could I learn, but the story is not undeserving record.

Ere I quit the subject of old stories, I shall mention one I have often heard related by Mr. Bray, who received it from his late father. This has already been slightly noticed by a most admirable writer, Baretti, in his letters addressed to his brothers, where he relates his progress from London to Falmouth, whence he set sail to Portugal, and so travelled on to Genoa. Baretti is one of those authors who, in the present day, have sunk into undeserved neglect. The natural and graphic manner in which he describes all he sees ; his lively sketches of the different characters he meets with in his journeys ; his constant good humour, and the kindness of heart which pervades all his letters, render the volumes that contain them so truly delightful, that we have perhaps no work of the kind that merits higher praise, or that would be more worthy reprinting in these times of cheap publication. And when we recollect that these letters, possessing so much merit, even in point of language and style as well as in matter, were written by a foreigner, they excite our surprise no less than our admiration. Having thus endeavoured to give the humble tribute of my praise to a neglected author whose books I have read three or four times, and always with renewed pleasure, I will state the circumstances mentioned by him.

After recounting, in his amusing way, his three days' journey in the stage-coach from London to Plymouth (a journey now performed in twenty-seven hours), and telling us how pleasantly he found him-

self situated in the stage with Miss Anne and Miss Helen, as travelling companions; the songs they sang to beguile the hours on the road, &c.; he gives us some notice of Plymouth, and then goes on to a town (Tavistock) in his way to Horse Bridge, whence he wrote the letter to which I allude, and at that time the passage from Devon into Cornwall; the Tamar dividing these counties. At Horse Bridge there was a little inn.

Baretti truly is faithful; and by his account we learn that, however things may change in this ever-varying world, our Tavistock weather is one of the most constant in nature, for he begins the letter in question with these words: "This has proved a *very rainy day*, which has made my short journey very disagreeable. At the town where I dined" (that town was Tavistock), "having nobody to talk to, and yet wanting to talk" (Baretti was one of those happy mortals who find pleasure and information in talking to the humblest as well as to the highest of their kind), "I asked mine hostess how she went on in her business?—'Very poorly,' said the old woman. 'I am very sorry to hear you say so, said I; but how can this be, as the town seems so populous?'" The good woman then told the Italian traveller her tale, which, as he heard the leading facts from *herself*, I shall here repeat by again quoting his letter.

"The old woman informed me that almost the whole territory of that town belonged to a noble peer" (that was the Duke of Bedford) "who never goes there" (the present duke honours it, however, occasionally with his presence), "and leaves all his concerns to the management of an agent." If Baretti heard the agent's name he did not state it; but I

shall venture to do so, as the man has been dead for years, our traveller having written this letter in 1760. The agent's name then was Butcher; and truly, by the old woman's account, he did not deserve one a whit more gentle, for she thus goes on with his history: "Now the agent by these means, from a very insignificant fellow that he originally was, is become a most considerable personage in the town, and plays the bashaw over almost every body there. 'Do you see,' quoth the old woman, 'that girl there? Well, she is a virtuous girl, and never would mind the agent. I will say no more: but he took something amiss in us, and declared himself our enemy.'"

He did indeed declare and prove himself an enemy to these poor people; for when the new road was about that time made over Dartmoor, it served him as an excuse for the erection of a new bridge, which he contrived to have built higher up the river, so that it might lead travellers coming from Moreton, Exeter, and Ashburton, to an inn he favoured, instead of that occupied by the persons he was determined to ruin. The old bridge he caused to be taken down, and a few vestiges of it still remain on either side of the river. It was of very ancient construction, and led immediately to the house where Baretto dined. After the building of the new bridge, it must seldom have been crossed, previous to its destruction, excepting by travellers from Plymouth on their road to Falmouth, a circumstance which induces me to conjecture that it was standing when the Italian letter-writer visited this town, and that thus he found his way to the neglected inn.

"'He is,'" continued the old woman, still speaking of the agent to Baretto, "'all powerful here, and does

right and wrong just as he lists ; nor can we get any redress, as the justice himself stands in fear of him. Some of the townsmen who have been wronged by the agent, as well as we, have gone severally to London to complain of him to the Lord ; but never could get admittance, because he is too great a man to be spoke to by ordinary people, besides that several of his grace's servants are in the bashaw's interest, and take care to stop all information. Every body gives a good word to the lord, and says that he would set all things to rights if he was but apprised of what is doing in this place.<sup>1</sup> To distress me and my family, the agent will have nothing further to do with any inhabitant who comes to my inn ; and he has it in his power to harass many, and deny bread to many, having, as I said, the management of almost all the land in the territory, and many of them being the lord's tenants. Thus am I ruined,' continued the old woman, 'as I have no means of subsistence but such chance travellers as you are, and the road from Plymouth to Falmouth is not much frequented. Not a single glass of cider can I sell to any body dependent on that man ; they all avoid me and my house as if the plague was in it.'"

On this circumstance Baretti makes some just remarks, and concludes them thus : "No such laws can be thought on by mortal legislators as perfectly to screen the weak against the strong, or the poor against the rich, especially when the subject of complaint is not so great as to draw the public attention,

<sup>1</sup> So he did at last ; for Baretti adds, in a note, in a subsequent edition of his work—"The complaints of the inhabitants, as I was casually apprised since my return to England, *have* reached the peer, and the agent has been turned out of his place."



which is generally the case in those many oppressions that the little endure from the great. Innumerable are the distresses that one part of mankind would heap upon the other were it not for a law much higher than any you can pass. That law you must all endeavour to inculcate to each other, that it may spread further and further; that alone will prove powerful if you keep it; but if you despise or neglect it, none else will be much conducive to the suppression and extinction of petty tyranny. Thus did I go on moralizing the whole afternoon, closely shut up in my chaise because of the rain. This inn" (at Horse Bridge where he wrote the letter) "is the last place in Devonshire. To-morrow I shall be in Cornwall by break of day."

Having space left, and the epistle itself being of a very miscellaneous nature, I propose finishing it with some 'disjointed chat' on matters I have collected *in obedience to you*; and that is the best apology I can offer for sending what follows. Do you remember a letter I had the pleasure of receiving from Keswick, dated February 6th, 1832? In the letter to which I allude there is this passage, that I here give in case you should have forgotten it:—"Gather up all the traditions you can, and even the nursery songs: no one can tell of what value they may prove to an antiquary. The Danes have a collection of such traditions in two volumes—every local story, wise or silly, that could be collected—and a very curious book it is: my son and I are just coming to the end of it in our lessons. There is matter enough in such things for fancy and for reflection, to point a moral, or work up into a poem, and not unfrequently to elucidate something in the history of former times.

Mary Colling may be a very useful helpmate." And so Mary has been ; and by-and-by I shall give more than one proof of it, for I am now going to tell some wonderful tales, that I hope you will not find less so than those contained in the Danish book, and not a whit less marvellous than such as I have already told—

"Of fairy elves,  
Whose midnight revels by a forest side,  
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,  
Or dreams he sees ; while overhead the moon  
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth  
Wheels her pale course."

My tales, however, now are anything but of a light-some character—they are of 'midnight hags' who do 'deeds without a name.' These have been gleaned amongst the elders of Tavistock and its vicinity, and are purely traditional ; but I do not believe that I am the *first* gleaner, for I rather think that a learned author, Joseph Glanville, famous for his *Book on Wytches*, has been beforehand with me in Tavistock, and no wonder. This country was well known to him ; he was born at Plymouth, and was of a branch of the celebrated Glanville family of Kilworthy ; and I doubt not must have been, from that circumstance, a frequent visitant in our town and neighbourhood, where he was no idle listener to old tales, I will warrant. Though it is some time since I saw his work, and I expected to see the candles burn blue, and the cats begin to dance, even like his own, whilst reading it ; yet I have a very, very, strong recollection of a certain story of devilry in it so similar to one still told by the elders of this place, that I cannot help believing it is in substance founded on the same.

An old witch, in days of yore, lived in this neighbourhood; and whenever she wanted money she would assume the shape of a hare, and would send out her grandson to tell a certain huntsman who lived hard by, that he had seen a hare sitting at such a particular spot, for which he always received the reward of sixpence. After this deception had many times been practised, the dogs turned out, the hare pursued, often seen, but never caught, a sportsman of the party began to suspect, in the language of tradition, 'that the devil was in the dance,' and there would be no end to it. The matter was discussed, a justice consulted, and a clergyman to boot; and it was thought that, however clever the devil might be, law and church combined would be more than a match for him. It was therefore agreed that, as the boy was singularly regular in the hour at which he came to announce the sight of the hare, all should be in readiness for a start the instant such information was given: and a neighbour of the witch, nothing friendly to her, promised to let the parties know directly the old woman and her grandson left the cottage and went off together; the one to be hunted, and the other to set on the hunt.

The news came, the hounds were unkennelled, and huntsmen and sportsmen set off with surprising speed. The witch, now a hare, and her little colleague in iniquity, did not expect so very speedy a turn out; so that the game was pursued at a desperate rate, and the boy, forgetting himself in a moment of alarm, was heard to exclaim, "Run, Granny, run; run for your life!" At last the pursuers lost the hare, and she once more got safe into the cottage by a little hole in the door; not large enough to admit a hound

in chase. The huntsman and all the squires with their train lent a hand to break open the door, yet could not do it till the parson and the justice came up ; but as law and church were certainly designed to break through iniquity, even so did they now succeed in bursting the magic bonds that opposed them. Up stairs they all went. There they found the old hag bleeding, and covered with wounds, and still out of breath. She denied she was a hare, and railed at the whole party. "Call up the hounds," said the huntsman, "and let us see what they take her to be ; may be we may yet have another hunt."

On hearing this, the old woman cried quarter. The boy dropped on his knees, and begged hard for mercy, which was granted on condition of its being received together with a good whipping ; and the huntsman, having long practised amongst the hounds, now tried his hand on other game. Thus the old woman escaped a worse fate for the time present ; but on being afterwards put on her trial for bewitching a young woman, and making her spit pins, the tale just told was given as evidence against her, before a particularly learned judge, and a remarkably sagacious jury, and the old woman finished her days, like a martyr, at the stake.

But our neighbourhood is much too rich in old tales to have merely *one* to tell about hounds and witches. If the last is not sufficiently wonderful, what think you of this ?

There is a place near our town called Heathfield—a gloomy and solitary waste. Heathfield was then just such as evil spirits delight in ; where, if people really see nothing, it is quite dreary and vast enough to

fancy they see a great deal, which, in these sort of cases, is much the same thing. On Heathfield the devils dance; I do not know who is the piper, as we have here no Tam o' Shanter to tell us; but I suppose the company are not without musicians to give them a few hints in the 'concord of sweet sounds.'

Now, as the old tale goes, there was, once upon a time—a mode of dating which all tellers of such tales as mine should never fail to employ, as it sets aside any small cavils that might arise from those awkward points in settling *real facts* that depend on chronology—there was, once upon a time, an old woman, and she made a slight mistake, I do not know how, and got up at midnight, thinking it to be morning. This good woman mounted her horse, and set off, panniers, cloak, and all, on her way to market. Anon she heard a cry of hounds, and soon perceived a hare rapidly making towards her. The hare, however, took a turn and a leap, and got on the top of the hedge, as if it would say, 'Come, catch me,' to the old woman. She liked such hunting as this very well, put forth her hand, secured the game, popped it into the panniers, covered it over, and rode forward. She had not gone far, when great was her alarm on perceiving in the midst of the dismal and solitary waste of Heathfield, advancing at full pace, a headless horse, bearing a black and grim rider, with horns sprouting from under a little jockey cap; and having a cloven foot thrust into one stirrup. He was surrounded by a pack of hounds, thus noticed by Mary Colling—

"Of hounds on Heathfield seen to rise,  
With hornèd heads and flaming eyes."

They had, according to tradition, tails too, that whisked about and shone like fire, and the air itself had a strong sulphureous scent. These were signs not to be mistaken; and the poor old woman knew in a moment that huntsman and hounds were taking a ride from the regions below. But it soon appeared that, however clever the devil might be, he was no conjurer; for he very civilly asked the old lady if she could set him right, and point out which way the hare was flown? Probably she thought it no harm to return the father of lies an answer in his own coin, so she boldly gave him a negative; and he rode on, nothing suspecting the cheat. When he was out of sight, she soon perceived the hare in the panniers begin to move, when to her utter amazement arose a beautiful young lady, all in white, who thus addressed her preserver:—"Good dame, I admire your courage; and thank you for the kindness with which you have saved me from a state of suffering that must not be told to human ears. Do not start when I tell you that I am not an inhabitant of the earth. For a great crime committed during the time I dwelt upon it, I was doomed, as a punishment in the other world, to be constantly pursued either above or below ground by evil spirits, until I could get behind their tails, whilst they passed on in search of me. This difficult object, by your means, I have now happily effected; and as a reward for your kindness I promise that all your hens shall lay two eggs instead of one, and that your cows shall yield the most plentiful store of milk all the year round; that you shall talk twice as much as you ever did before, and your husband stand no chance in any matter between you to be settled by the tongue. But beware of the devil,

and don't grumble about tithes ; for my enemy and yours may do you an ill turn when he finds out you were clever enough to cheat even him ; since, like all great impostors, he does not like to be cheated himself. He can assume all shapes, excepting those of the lamb and the dove."

The lady in white vanished, as all such white ladies ought to do ; the old market-woman found the best possible luck that morning in her traffic ; and to this day the story goes in our town, that from the Saviour of the world having hallowed the form of the lamb, and the Holy Ghost that of the dove, they can never be assumed by the mortal enemy of the human race under any circumstances.

Another story we have concerning his Satanic majesty shows him to be a great patron of fiddlers. Whenever he appeared before any one of these, he generally came in the shape of a gentleman, dressed in black, with white ruffles ; and he usually made so liberal a bargain that the sons of harmony were much pleased with him ; till they now and then happened to spy the cloven foot, a thing which he, like many other gentlemen of fashion, had no power to hide even in the best company.

Now the story goes that in the time of the monks, a certain fiddler guessed with whom he had made some such bargain, and went to consult one of those ghostly brothers what he had best do for safety. The monk told the fiddler to act like a man of honour, and always stick to a bargain though made with the devil himself ; or he would be sure to suffer grievous things before the time came that the compact should expire. But if in the interval a little coin was dropped to the brothers of the Abbey, one of them would

take his stand, and drive off Satan when he came to possess himself bodily of his prey. The devil generally agreed to meet his fiddler in a narrow lane; but when he found he could not nab him, he exclaimed, alluding to the monk stationed in ambush near the spot—" 'Tis the blackbird behind the hedge that keeps thee safe, thou scraper of old tunes, and foul railer against thy master. Know, fiddler mine, and I tell it thee only because I cannot help it, being compelled to do so by the exorcisms of the brethren now going on at the Abbey—that hadst thou never called for me, I had never appeared. But look to thyself, friend, and blame not me. Has it not ever been with thee, when thou wast angry, in mirth, in sadness, in bargaining, or in liquor; 'I wish the devil did this;' or, 'I wish the devil had me;' or, 'I wish the devil were here.' Devil here and devil there; and yet now is he unwelcome company. Go home, tune thy fiddle, play my lord abbot a psalm; leave off profane swearing, and obey the monks, not failing to give them their dues, and fear no more dog nor devil for the nonce."

Is not this story like one of the Old Moralities? May it not be a vestige of one of them, well known here in those days when the inhabitants of the monastery and the choir of the church acted holy plays?

Indeed, till within the last thirty years, the boys of this town, so I am informed, used every Christmas to act a standing old play, handed down by tradition, called the *Dying Miller*. Father Christmas was one of the characters, the New Year another, and St. George performed sundry feats of valour. Mary Colling has very kindly exerted herself to try if she



could recover for me any of the traditionary doggrel assigned to the parts in this piece ; some few lines of which she could remember having heard when a child. But hitherto we have not succeeded ; though many of the elders remember the characters, and the style in which they dressed them.

The most modern story I have heard of Satan is, that a youth of this neighbourhood went into the woods to pick nuts on a Sunday ; and the devil, pleased to see him so employed instead of going to church, kindly gave him assistance, and pulled down the bushes for him. The lad thought himself highly favoured, till he perceived the cloven foot ; when he instantly quitted the wood, but soon after died. "This story," says Mary, "is still told by mothers to their little boys to prevent their breaking the sabbath."

I now come to the vestiges of our ancient customs ; these having been gleaned by Mary and myself, but principally by her, amongst the good old folks of the town and neighbourhood. They are for the greater part fast wearing out, and two or three generations hence it is probable few traces may be left of their existence.

Brand quotes a passage from Moresin, that tends to show that in ancient times, at the festival of St. Valentine, men made presents to the women, as the women did to the men at other seasons. We have a vestige of this custom not altogether extinct ; for on St. Valentine's day a young woman sometimes thus addresses the first young man she meets :—

"Good morrow, Valentine, I go to-day  
To wear for you what you must pay,  
A pair of gloves next Easter day."

And new gloves are generally sent on Easter-eve by the young man whom any fair damsel may have selected to make her such a present, by thus inviting him to do it. It is not, however, I am told, very common to send the gloves, unless there is a little sweethearting in the case.

Washing clothes on a Good Friday is with us considered a great sin, and productive of the worst luck. Whoever does so is sure to wash away one of their family, who will die before the year is out. To wean children on this day is deemed very lucky. Many people then begin to till their gardens, as they believe, to use their own words, that all things put in the earth on a Good Friday will grow *goody*, and return to them with great increase.

Shrove Tuesday is a noted day in our town, though not so much kept as it used to be many years ago. The farmers considered it a great holiday, and every person who was in their employ feasted on pancakes. The great sport of the day was to assemble round the fire and each person to toss a cake before he had it for his supper. The awkwardness of the tossers, who were compelled to eat their share, even if it fell into the fire itself, afforded great diversion. Lent-crocking is a similar sport, and is still here and there practised in some of the old houses in the country. Parties of young persons would during Lent go to the most noted farm-houses, and sing, in order to obtain a crock (cake), an old song beginning

“ I see by the latch  
There is something to catch ;  
I see by the string  
The good dame’s within ;  
Give a cake, for I’ve none ;  
At the door goes a stone,  
Come give, and I’m gone.”

If invited in, a cake, a cup of cider, and a health followed. If not invited in, the sport consisted in battering the house door with stones, because not open to hospitality. Then the assailant would run away, be followed and caught and brought back again as prisoner, and have to undergo the punishment of roasting the shoe. This consisted in an old shoe being hung up before the fire, which the culprit was obliged to keep in a constant whirl, roasting himself as well as the shoe, till some damsel took compassion on him and let him go; in this case he was to treat her with a little present at the next fair.

It is here said, that if a young woman, on Midsummer-day, plucks a full-blown rose blindfolded, while the chimes are playing twelve, and folds it up in a sheet of white paper, and does not open it till Christmas-day, it will then be found as fresh as when gathered; and if she places it in her bosom, the young man to whom she is to be married will come and snatch it away.

Our poor people have many superstitious ideas about the days of the week. To begin to do anything on a Friday, or to make a journey or a bargain on that day, is held such bad luck, that I have known persons, even of the better order, put off an affair because they would not enter on it with an ill omen. The fortunes of children are likewise considered to be very much regulated by the day on which they were born. Here is a poetical adage on the subject common in our town :—

“ Monday's child is fair in face,  
Tuesday's child is full of grace,  
Wednesday's child is full of woe,  
Thursday's child has far to go,

Friday's child is loving and giving,  
Saturday's child works hard for its living ;  
And a child that's born on a Sabbath-day,  
Is fair and wise, good and gay."

The 29th of May is still a holiday much observed in our town, though, I am told, far less so than it used to be some years back. A notion prevailed that on that day any person might cut oak boughs wherever he pleased, provided it was done before six o'clock, and the youths and maidens would rise with the light to prepare for the sports. These oak boughs were hung around the doors and windows ; and chaplets, &c., duly placed in bonnets and hats. In the afternoon a mock battle followed (originally intended, as far as I can collect, to represent the republican and monarchical parties), the combatants in which, on the royal side, were armed with kettles and buckets of water. The republicans proceeded to tear down the oak boughs from the doors and windows : and these assailants were well drenched whilst a scuffle ensued—all carried on with the utmost good humour—and if the young men succeeded in getting the boughs, they used to tie them together and drag them through the town in token of victory ; but were generally waylaid and dispossessed of their trophies by the opposite party. The inhabitants would give them pence to make merry with after their frolic.

However, during one of these frolics, about thirty years ago, rather an unpleasant affair took place from the following circumstance. This vicinity was a great dépôt for French prisoners ; and some of the officers lodged in the town. Opposite a house where one of them resided was erected a grand display of oak boughs and May bushes on the top of a long

pole. Some mischievous individual persuaded the foreigner that it was a part of the sports for some person, as a good joke, to remove it, and induced Monsieur to perform the feat. He, thinking no harm, did so, when a stout old fellow, a true John Bull, who lived near, seeing this act committed by the Frenchman, considered it a premeditated insult to the royal family of England, as the oak boughs were suspended in honour of the restoration to the crown. Fired with rage, he sallied forth armed with a poker, and commenced so vigorous an assault on the poor foreigner, that had not the more peaceably disposed interfered and made up matters, he would very likely have left the luckless offender scarcely a whole bone in his skin. Amongst the little boys, this day goes by the name of *Garland-day*. Before it arrives, the children go about in parties, six or seven together, *halfing*, as they call it. This custom is nothing more than to collect as many birds' eggs as they can against Garland-day; and all the neighbours, high or low, who happen to be possessed of a garden, are duly teased and laid under contribution to give away their flowers to make trophies. The garlands are carried about thus formed—two crossed hoops are entwined with flowers, and strung with birds' eggs in the middle; every egg being held allowable, save that of the redbreast; if such is discovered in a garland it is quickly assailed with stones and destroyed. Very few children in this town would hurt a redbreast, as it is considered unlucky to do so; this bird being entitled to kindness from the human race above every other bird that flies. Mary Colling thinks it is held thus sacred from the sympathy excited for it by that

most beautiful of all ballads, *The Children in the Wood*; where the redbreast covers the poor little things with leaves. But I am rather disposed to think, that in the ballad the robin is assigned by the poet to perform that charitable office in consequence of his tenderness and sympathy for man; as of all birds robin is most confiding and fearless in his approaches towards us; he comes familiarly to our doors; he will not hesitate to enter our dwellings; and may be tamed to pick crumbs from our hands. The peasantry here have a most uncouth name for this pretty bird; they call it *pausty-legs*. I could not guess even what this name meant, till Mr. Johnes told me it was intended for 'posty-legs,' or legs like a post.

To return from this digression: the little boys are fantastically dressed early in the morning with ribands tied round their arms and waists, and a smart garland cap on their heads, made of pasteboard, decorated with gold paper, and little prints with a gilt border, finished with oak leaves intermixed. Thus equipped, they parade about the town, each little party by itself; the leader, who is generally the eldest boy, carries the garland. Others have little drums, and whistles, and swords of lath; a triangle is their music; they collect the donations of the public; and in the afternoon the money is equally divided among them. The garland eggs are placed on some block or post; and their great amusement is to throw stones, and try who can break the most. This is our Tavistock way of celebrating King Charles's restoration, amongst the younger tribe. The elders go to church, and Mr. Bray annually gives them an appropriate sermon.

We have many vestiges of ancient superstitions. That respecting Midsummer-eve I have before noticed. And the very old custom of going into the church at night whilst the chimes are playing twelve o'clock, in order to creep three times under the communion table to be cured of fits, is still held in repute. The present sexton, Mr. James Cole, has been applied to in such cases to unlock the church door. Mr. Bray considers this custom a vestige of the very ancient one of creeping under the tolmen to be cured of various disorders.<sup>2</sup> We have another practice, which I am assured is frequently observed as a cure for the toothache: a very general complaint in this neighbourhood, where it is common to see *young* women with not a sound front tooth in their heads; and many a handsome face is thus spoilt and looks old before its time. I attribute this to the use of a very acid cider as a daily beverage; nor do I think I am mistaken; as the decay of the teeth, so early in life, is most common with the servant girls and lower orders, who never drink anything else with their meals; whilst some of the very poor cottagers in the surrounding country, who seldom taste anything stronger than water, or milk and water, often have teeth white and sound as pearls. Here is the cure for the toothache: if the sufferer have a tooth left sufficiently whole to enable him to use it. "Take

<sup>2</sup> Since writing the above, Mr. Bray received, as clergyman of the place, the following letter: I omit only the name of the writer—"Rev. Sir, I should take it as a great favour if your Honour would be good enough to let me have the key of the churchyard to-night, to go in at twelve o'clock, to cut off three bits of lead about the size of a half farthing each, from three different shuts [meaning spouts], for the cure of fits. Sir, I remain, your humble obedient servant,

"Tavistock, February 2d, 1835.

(Signed)

J. M."

an old skull found in the churchyard, bite a tooth out of it, and keep it in your pocket all the year round, and never more will you have pain in your teeth or gums."

Our terror of meeting a single magpie crossing our path is very great. Sad must be the fortune of any person who has this mishap—sad I am sure then must be mine; for the last I called 'magpie year;' never once did we ride, walk, or drive along the Plymouth road, a favourite ride of ours, without meeting a solitary magpie strutting or flying most ominously across the road. Now and then we saw a couple, which is *good* luck; once three, a sign of a wedding; and once four, a sign of death.

We have a thistle that is considered holy. I do not know its particular species; but the plant itself is noble and beautiful. One of them, above five feet in height, sprang up wild in our garden in the midst of a strawberry bed. It had a large purple flower, and the stems and leaves spread to a very great extent. So much did Mr. Bray admire it, that he would not suffer it to be disturbed. This plant is valuable in a medicinal view; the old women here say it is a cure for all disorders; and when I was so ill last summer, more than one wanted to persuade me to make a decoction and try it. On the leaves of this thistle there are white specks, which, I learn from the venerable authority just quoted, is occasioned by the Virgin Mary having sprinkled her milk on this very plant during her flight into Egypt. This conferred a blessing on the thistle, and made it salutary for ever.

I here say nothing about the 'thousand and one' charms we have in this county for curing the king's



evil; some of them being as delicately pleasing as the cure for the toothache; let them go; the least offensive, however, is that of Queen Anne's farthing, a stale and common charm in many counties.

Reading the eighth psalm over the heads of infants three times, three days in the week, for three following weeks, will, they say, prevent babes having the thrush. Another very old custom which prevails amongst the poor is that of unlocking the boxes in the house where a friend is dying: they consider it makes the sick person die easy.

As we have unlucky omens, so have we likewise lucky ones. The sun shining on the bride going to church is particularly fortunate. It is fortunate, also, to see the new moon on the right hand; and when you do so it is a prudent thing to shake your pockets: for what purpose I cannot tell; but as it is likewise deemed wisdom to pull out your money and let the new moon shine upon it, I suppose it is connected with good fortune in a pecuniary point of view.

Another of our customs is not, I believe, confined to this place; it is that of the *Bible and the key*. Many old people when they have lost anything, and suspect it to be stolen, take the fore-door key of their dwelling, and, in order to find out the thief, tie this key to the Bible, placing it very carefully on the eighteenth verse of the fiftieth psalm. Two persons must then hold up the book by the bow of the key, and first repeat the name of the suspected thief, and then the verse from the psalm. If the Bible moves, the suspected person is considered guilty; if it does not move, innocent.

When the poor get a loaf from the flour of *new*

corn, the first who gets it gives a mouthful, as they say, to his or her neighbour, and they fill their mouths as full as they can, in order not to want bread before the harvest comes round again.

Mary informs me that one day, when herself and her little dog Dimpler took a walk into the country very lovingly together, she happened to pass by a cottage and garden. Pleased with the neatness and prettiness of the spot, she stayed awhile to look on the flowers. A poor woman, seeing she did so, came out, asked her to walk in, and gave her a very pretty nosegay. Mary observed in the cottage window several beautiful plants, each having a small piece of black crape or riband tied around it. She inquired what might be the reason of their being so decorated ; when the poor woman told her, with a sigh, that she had very lately buried her husband, and that if she had not put the plants into mourning they would have died too. Mary was much affected by the distress she evidently saw putting these questions had given the poor widow, and said she was sorry she had asked about the plants. But the widow told her not to grieve for that ; the question was natural enough for one who came from a town, but the custom was a usual thing in the country.

There is much talk in this place about a mysterious and subterranean passage (I should like to find it out), that leads all the way from the Abbey to the gateway of Fitzford ; a great deal of wealth in coin and plate, including, as I was told, 'a crucifix as large as life,' being there deposited. Mary heard an old woman say that she was told by her great-grandmother, that during the Civil Wars a waggon load of plate was carried in there, and never afterwards brought out.

An inhabitant of this town, I am likewise informed, once discovered, whilst rooting up an apple-tree at Fitzford, some steps; and digging still deeper, found an entrance which led underground. Several persons went down, but none presumed to follow up the discovery as it ought to have been followed. I hear, too (but pray observe I do not vouch for the truth of any of these tales), that a man named Bickley, whilst employed in raising sand in a place called Jessop's Hay, dug up, as he imagined, a bag of fine sand, which proved to be a bag of gold dust. He also discovered a pavement supposed to be that of the passage. Every body, I observe, has a tale to tell about this old passage; but question them closely, and you are sure to find they heard it from somebody, who heard it from somebody else, and so on—a sort of evidence to be cautiously admitted in a statement of facts.

That there was a passage, however, belonging to, or connected with, the Abbey, is not at all improbable; and if I were inclined to credit any of the above stories it would be the old woman's about the plate. Because, as I shall relate when we come to the times of Charles the First, Fitzford House was bravely held out by the Royalists, and taken by storm by the Parliament party. The prisoners were not likely to point out to sequestrators and republicans where they had hidden the wealth, probably of all the Royalists in the town, who had taken shelter in Fitzford, and assisted in the defence of that mansion; and time, death, and many other chances might, in such perils, have intervened to prevent its recovery. More of this hereafter.

I was about to conclude this long 'and very pithy'

letter, as a good friend of mine calls the subjects on which I have been writing, when Mary Colling, who always acts as her own postman, brought me one written by herself, in reply to some questions I had proposed to her, about certain places, &c., in our town. I shall here, therefore, transcribe a portion of her letter.

“MY DEAR MADAM,—On the south side of the Tavy is a hamlet consisting of several cottages, called in the parish register Dolvins, but better known to the inhabitants by the name of Guernsey, that nickname having been given to it in consequence of a very noted smuggler who resided there some years ago. At a little distance eastward is another hamlet, called Greenland, from its cold situation; the sun seldom shines upon it, as it is overhung with a very high rock, whence issue several springs of water; and during the winter the icicles (or, as the little boys call them, the cockables) which hang from it, are looked upon as a great curiosity, from their size and transparency. The Exeter road, opposite this hamlet, affords a picturesque view of the bright stream of water from the rock which dashes into your favourite Tavy. Near are a rookery and an orchard, that in summer add to the beauty of the scene. The wild flowers, which there grow in abundance, have also a pretty appearance; and though the place is considered so cold, there is a very good garden that abounds with various sorts of flowers. The female who resides in a neat cottage attached to it, takes great pride in her garden, every corner of it having a something to boast of.

“In reply to the question about the haunted house, I have learned the following particulars. About half

a mile from Tavistock there is a farm called Down House ; the dwelling itself was rebuilt about eleven or twelve years ago. It was considered before an ancient place, and haunted by ghosts. Here is a story of one. The family who resided there well knew the hour of the night in which the ghosts made their appearance, and always took care to go to bed before they came. But it happened on a time that a child was very ill, and asked its mother for water ; she went to the pitcher to get some, when the child refused any but such as might be got directly from the pump. The mother became quite distressed, unwilling to displease the child, yet afraid to go down to the pump, as it was about the hour in which the ghost walked. She considered upon it a little while, and at last said, 'In the name of God I will go down.' She did so. Passing over the stairs she perceived a shadow, and then she heard footsteps ; and when she came to the pump she felt a hand on her shoulder. She turned and perceived a tall man. Summoning a good resolution, however, she said, 'In the name of God, why troublest thou me?' The ghost replied, 'It is well for thee that thou hast spoken to me in the name of God ; this being the last time allotted me to trouble this world, or else I should have injured thee. Now do as I tell thee, and be not afraid. Come with me, and I will direct thee to a something which shall remove this pump : under it is concealed treasure.'

"This something was procured, and applied as the ghost directed. The pump was quickly removed, when under it there lay a great deal of money. She was desired to take up the treasure and stock her farm with it. And the spirit told her that if ever

any person molested or deprived her of her property, he should suffer well for it. He then ordered her to go and give the water to the child, who, in reward for her courage and trust in God, should recover. The cock crew ; directly the figure dwindled again to a shadow, ascended through the air, and she watched till he soon became a small bright cloud."

"There is," says Mary Colling, in another letter, "scarcely an old man or woman in Tavistock but can tell some story or other about your Lady Howard. Some have seen her in the shape of a calf ; others as a woolsack full of eyes, rolling along from Fitzford. But most have seen her as a greyhound, and very often in the coach of bones, as described by you in *Fitz of Fitzford*."

Thus ends Mary Colling's account, and my letter too, having sent quite enough hobgoblins for one packet ; and lest the post-office should be troubled, and complain to Sir Francis Freeling if I send more, I will conclude with wishing you may be ghost-free all your days.

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## LETTER XXX.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

Kilworthy—The old Mansion and its present state—Avenue of old Beech-trees—The Pixies' Pool—Walla Brook—Ina's Coombe—Browne and Carrington; their Poetry—Judge Glanville—His Tomb in Tavistock Church—Effigies of himself and Lady—All the real History of Judge Glanville concluded; the traditionary stated—Whence derived—Fictions by the Writer in the tale of *Fitz of Fitzford*—The real Traditions on which the Work was founded—Traditionary Tale of Judge Glanville and his Daughter—Character of Betsy Grimal; on what founded—Lady Howard—The Gateway at Fitzford; the Spectre Hound—The Coach of Bones—Tales of Superstition—The story of John Fitz, of Fitzford, the Lawyer and Astrologer, and Sir Nicholas Slanning—Sir John Page said to have married a Daughter of Glanville; Sir John a Merchant of Plymouth—His House in that Town—Page's Coffin found and opened—Lamentable Tragedy of Page of Plymouth—Another interesting Tale respecting a Son of Judge Glanville, mentioned by Prince—Sketch of the Life of Sir John Glanville, Serjeant-at-Law—Glanville six times a Prisoner in the course of his Life—University of Oxford return him as their Burgess—Cromwell will not allow him to sit in the House—He pleads as a Lawyer the cause of the Loyalists—The first Friend of Sir Matthew Hale—Amiable character of Glanville—The beautiful Story of Glanville's conduct to his Brother Francis related—Francis knighted by Charles II.—He marries a Daughter of W. Crymes—Death of the great Sir John Glanville—The Estate of Kilworthy—Manuscript sent to the Writer whilst engaged on his Life—Glanville the Friend of Learning—His Works political—His Lines to Browne the Poet—The Sons of the Serjeant distinguished—Joseph Glanville, Chaplain in ordinary to Charles I., last Descendant of the elder Branch of this illustrious Family—Sir John Maynard born in Tavistock—His early Life; conduct in the time of Charles I.—His Integrity—Member for Beeralston—Little known of his private Life—His Charities—His Reply to King William when above Ninety Years old—His Death.

*Vicarage, Tavistock, January 28th, 1833.*

THERE is an old house and domain in this neighbourhood, which has often set me moralizing, as did Baretti, when shut up in his post-chaise, on the rainy afternoon he drove from Tavistock to Horse Bridge. There are so many recollections of former times, of old tales and traditions, connected with the domain in question, that it is the finest place possible for the indulgence of imagination ; and though, as you will presently find, you are not altogether a stranger to it, yet I purpose in this letter to make you still more intimately acquainted with the localities of *Kilworthy* ; nor shall I let you off till Judge Glanville, the founder of the mansion, and his sons and his grandsons have passed in succession before you, even as did the ghosts before Macbeth in the cave of the witches ; nor must you suppose this to be by any means an inappropriate simile ; for if you did not really see these shadows of the mighty of former generations in our parish of Tavistock, you *might* see them, if report speaks truth, which is much the same thing, by only visiting Kilworthy at the dead hour of night, ‘the bell then beating one,’ when ‘churchyards yawn, and graves give up their dead.’ It is undoubtedly true that though I have heard a great deal about the ‘walking of the old Judge,’ I never yet had the pleasure to meet him. Possibly, however, this may arise from no want of civility on his part towards me, who have already made him figure in print. Thus, therefore, you find I am reduced to the necessity of giving you all my stories of this nature on the credit of others, and not on that of my own eyes ; a thing



I deem a great misfortune, because sometimes when people are good enough to tell me a few 'real facts' that somewhat startle my belief, I am so mistrustful and incredulous to wish for ocular demonstration.

There is a melancholy feeling which constantly assails us when we witness the decay of greatness, either in animate or inanimate things; ever accompanied by that humiliating reflection so often made the moral of tombstones and monuments—*Sic transit gloria mundi*. How fully do we experience this feeling when we look upon the walls of some old but once stately mansion falling to decay, or patched and supported by meaner buildings, wholly incongruous in date and appearance with the original edifice! And though Nature and art agree very well together, where they have been purposely combined, yet this is not the case where the former breaks in upon the latter with a desolating hand. Thus, when in an old-fashioned garden we see the hedges of box and of yew that once were trimmed and clipped into order and formality, now growing ragged and wild; the long avenues left between them choked up with brambles and weeds; whilst many a stately terrace of hewn stone presents the mere wreck of fallen greatness; its steps green, tottering, broken and half covered with creeping plants;—the aspect of the whole is so cheerless, that it calls up in the mind nothing but a sense of the vanity and littleness of the works of man, in these adornments of his domestic habitation.

Such are the feelings I have more than once experienced when visiting the now humbled remains of Kilworthy, once the splendid mansion of the Glanvilles, a family long distinguished in Devon.

The house was built by them in the reign of Elizabeth. This structure partook of that combination of heavy and clumsy ornament common to the period, yet rendered imposing by the grandeur that characterized the original proportions of the building to which it was appended. The front of Kilworthy, facing the south, displayed many a window, divided in the midst by mullions so large and broad, that they not a little obscured the light the windows were intended to admit.

Such *was* Kilworthy; but it no longer appears in its original form. It underwent considerable alterations in the reign of Charles II., and, lastly and still worse, in that of George III., when, nearly sixty years since, the front was entirely modernized. In a long passage of the house, as well as in one of its chambers, may still be seen a vast number of paintings on panel, representing, in succession, the arms, alliances, &c., of the family of Glanville, for many generations. The hall, though now but a vestige of what it once was, shows enough to indicate its former grandeur: it was originally lofty—it is now low, and divided by a partition. Then it was panelled on either side with oak, and had a fireplace large enough to contain several persons within its ample sides. I can fancy what it was in the Judge's time, when the dogs or andirons, that supported the blazing logs, were, no doubt, finished at their tops with solid and chased silver. The recesses still in the hall must have been a more modern construction, since neither these, nor the gilded Corinthian capitals of the pilasters, are older than the time of Charles II.

The gardens of Kilworthy, where slight traces of their ancient grandeur may even yet be seen, were

on a scale suited to the place. They ran along the side of an elevated piece of ground to the west of the house; being entered through a pair of ample gates, on whose supporters appeared, at the top of either, a formidable lion rampant, holding in his claws the saltire or, or cross of the Glanvilles, and frowning augustly upon all intruders. These, I will venture to say, in the Judge's days did not half so well guard the golden fruits of the Hesperides within, as did one of those large and fierce hounds, then so constantly found to perform the part of watch at the doors of the wealthy. The lions, and the original gates of wrought iron, are now gone; but opening those wooden ones that have succeeded them, a second and third sort of terrace leads on to the rising garden, the steepness of the ascent being thus broken; and many a gay parterre no doubt once lay around, exhibiting an endless diversity of flowers and plants. When I saw the gardens of Kilworthy in their more humble state, there were some beautiful roses in them, and a fine show of fruit. Kilworthy had once a chapel, but that has long disappeared, or has been converted into one of the barns. The dove-cot, stables, and other offices stood near enough to the house for domestic convenience, yet not so near as to become an annoyance to the family residing in it.

A noble avenue of old beech trees, their trunks overgrown with moss, and affording the deepest shade, led on the way from the then principal road to the mansion, affording the passenger here and there, between their trunks and branches, those peeps of landscape and of the Dartmoor heights, always so welcome to the lover of the picturesque. These beech trees still remain, venerable from time, and

happily untouched by the axe. There are also some very aged ones of exceeding beauty, in what was once the park, where the red deer used to graze on the perpetual herbage the climate secures to our fields. There is one place in Kilworthy which deserves peculiar notice; it is where formerly a pond was supplied by a pretty little streamlet that runs meandering through the grounds. Above this, at the spot I allude to, an old broken bridge of a single arch, and miniature dimensions, still crosses it. The spot is so hung with aged trees, their roots starting from the banks, and overshadowing with their green arms the rippling waters, that it is the very scene in which one would fancy the pixies and fays make their haunts. Here the space is not large; the eye cannot wander beyond its green enclosure of deep boughs. All is still and apparently remote from human habitation: so sheltered is it from the winds that they seldom wander here in rude gusts. The birds are very fond of building their nests in this place, and seldom have I visited it without being struck by the peculiar effect produced by that wild music, so sweet to the ear of fancy, that they made among the boughs, whilst the vocalists themselves were often unseen. The notes of the blackbird and the thrush mingled delightfully with the very gentlest murmur of the very softest stream. And this I used to fancy was exactly such a spot as that where Ariel led Ferdinand by the guidance of an unseen minstrel. I could almost imagine I saw him looking round with wonder, as he exclaimed,

“Where should this music be? ’t the air,  
Or the earth? It sounds no more,  
Yet it crept by me upon the waters.”

This place has, since I endeavoured to describe a scene suggested by it, received the name of the Pixies' Pool. Few scenes, indeed, will afford to the mind of the painter and the poet a more calm and contemplative pleasure, than that experienced whilst listening to the wild songs of the birds, and looking on the still and clear shadows in the Pixies' Pool.



PIXIES' POOL.

But I must not indulge this descriptive mood. Should any tourist, who may chance to visit the beautiful vicinity of Tavistock, ascend the hill to the north of our town and visit Kilworthy, the walk will be good for his health, and will certainly soon give him the assurance, if he can bear the ascent, that he is, as the jockeys say of a horse, sound in wind; since a more steep, rough, or rugged path will scarcely be found near any town in the county of Devon. Yet, the acclivity once mastered, he will be amply repaid

for the trouble by the pleasing variety of objects that form the surrounding view.

Tavistock, with the clustering pinnacles of what remains of its venerable Abbey, the Tavy winding beautifully amidst a long extent of valley, closed in by hills partially clothed with wood (in Judge Glanville's time they were almost wholly), presents at every turn a scene of peculiar interest, and one that might be rendered more so if those who have the management of the lands in this part of Devon (and should they ever see this letter I hope they will not despise the hint) would but follow the example of the neighbourhood of Exeter, and suffer the trees to grow up in the hedges as they do near that ancient city, and not indulge the fondness for lopping which now permits the axe to be laid to the trunk of every sapling that dares lift its head above the prescribed height of each hedge-enclosed field. I hope to see this improvement, that the landscape, a thing not so subject to the mutations of time as are buildings of stone or wood, may again become as waving with forest trees as it was when viewed by the Glanvilles from their sylvan grounds of Kilworthy. Once more to return to their dwelling.

To the east, though at some distance from the steep hill on which the house stands, the ground runs in a precipitous descent towards the valley, through which flows the little stream of the Walla Brook, visiting in its course *Ina's Coombe*. This coombe and the waters must be considered with interest, and the Walla, indeed, ranked amongst the classical fountains of England, since each has been celebrated by Browne in his *Britannia's Pastorals*. Browne, born in Tavistock, and possessing that love of nature in-

herent in the breast of every child of song, delighted to describe the beautiful scenery of his native place, and with him the wanderer through Kilworthy may truly exclaim,

“Show me who can so many christall rylls,  
Such sweet-clothed valleys, or aspiring hills.”

And to this encomium may be fairly added that of another poet of our neighbourhood, too early lost to us: Carrington thus writes,

“Lovely Devonia ! land of flowers and songs !  
To thee the duteous lay. Thou hast a cloud  
For ever in thy sky—a breeze, a shower  
For ever on thy meads ; yet where shall man,  
Pursuing spring around the globe, refresh  
His eye with scenes more beauteous than adorn  
Thy fields of matchless verdure ?”

Having now endeavoured to give you some idea of Kilworthy, I shall proceed to mention all I have been able to learn, both from written record and tradition, concerning the family who built and resided in that mansion.

“Sir John Glanville,” says Prince, “one of the Justices of the Common Pleas, was a native of this county, and born in the famous town of Tavistock.” He goes on to state, though he is not certain of the fact, that this gentleman was descended from Ranulph de Glanvil, a great man in the days of William the Conqueror ; and his grandson, he tells us, was a still greater in the times of Henry II. ; for he was a baron of Parliament, and so skilled in the laws of the realm that he was made one of the Justices itinerant in the twenty-fifth year of that king’s reign ; and soon after raised to the dignity of ‘Justice of all England.’ Thus early was a Glanville celebrated for his pro-

found knowledge of the laws, and his posterity appear to have inherited his aptitude for the legal profession.

John, the subject of this sketch, being but a younger branch of their stately tree, had not the advantage of a university education, and commenced his career in no more eminent station than that of an attorney-at-law. However he might be wanting in the early benefits conferred by regular study in the schools of learning, he had so much perseverance that, after he entered himself of the Society of Lincoln's Inn, he rose into great promise and reputation, having applied his mind with indefatigable industry to the study of the profession. In the thirty-first year of Elizabeth's reign, 1589, he was called to the bar, and a few years after chosen Lent Reader in his house; and, being nearly at the same time summoned to the degree of Serjeant-at-Law, he read in the following autumn. His reputation, as is often seen with persons of real merit, constantly increased with every favouring opportunity he found of bringing his talents into play. Glanville was soon deemed worthy higher preferment, so that in 1598 he was made one of the Justices of Common Pleas—an office he filled with the greatest honour and integrity. This, however, he did not long enjoy, as he died about two years after, and was buried in Tavistock.

Judge Glanville early in life had married a lady whose name was Skirret; he had by her three sons and four daughters. Of the former I shall have more to say presently in my letter; but I cannot conclude this brief notice of the Judge without giving his character in the words of Prince, who lived so much nearer his time than we do, and from all circumstances



was so likely to be well acquainted with it. "He was," continues the venerable biographer, "not only skilled in the deep and more recondite points of the law, but he was also a great lover of justice and integrity, being careful in his place to hold the balances intrusted to him, as became him, with an even and steady hand; not inclining to either side, out of awe or dread, out of favour or affection: he would not oppress the small to please the great, but administer justice, according to his oath, indifferently to all, with that uprightness and honesty as one conscious to himself he must one day come to judgment, and have all his judgments judged over again. This learned person, dying at Tavistock, July 27th, 1600, was interred in the parish church thereunto belonging, where is erected to his memory a very fair monument, so lively representing his person in his scarlet robes, that some at their first entrance into one of the doors there, against which it stands, have been surprised at the sight, supposing it had been living."

The effigy of Judge Glanville, thus lauded by Prince, is certainly a very superior work of art. There is so much character about the face and head, that I have no doubt it was an excellent likeness. Mr. Bray tells me it so exactly corresponds with an old picture, on panel, representing the Judge in his black cap and scarlet robes, that was for years in the possession of his late father, that it confirms the circumstance. The effigy is that of a corpulent man lying at full length on his side; the upper part of the body being raised, and the left arm resting on a cushion. The countenance and brows in particular exhibit those strong marks of intellectual superiority which ever distinguish a man of talent. As a whole

his head is striking and impressive, notwithstanding the injury it has sustained by the loss of a part of the nose; the hands have likewise been mutilated, as well as many parts of the tomb. I have no doubt these injuries had their origin in the Civil Wars, when Tavistock was at one period in a very disturbed state. In front of the Judge, but beneath the figure, kneels, in a praying attitude, the effigy of Dame Glanville. This, too, is so characteristic, that it must have been an excellent likeness. She is also noseless; but truly estimating her by what remains of her face, one would be led to fancy her husband had made, as many other wise men have done, rather an unfortunate choice in his partner for life. The forehead is low and mean; and the whole expression of the countenance conveys a strong idea of a proud, cross, disagreeable woman. And if the dress is correct, and there can be no doubt it is so, she must have been as fond of finery as good Queen Bess herself was known to be. Seneca described woman as 'an animal fond of dress.' This is rather severe upon the ladies; nor ought we to feel very well pleased with the old Roman, nor with any other philosopher, for indulging a querulous mood against us. This, however, is rather an odd digression in the midst of describing Judge Glanville's monument, and the figure of his lady. Her dress, then, is the most extravagant representation of the most formidable array of the day of Elizabeth. Her buckram waist, like armour, sleeves, ruff, and farthingale, are all monstrous; and her double-linked gold chains are grand enough for the lord mayor. On the whole she looks so very formidable, that thus seen stationed before the Judge, she might be considered as representing Justice

herself, but it would be in her severest mood. In front of the base of the tomb are seen several small figures about a foot high; these are the miniature effigies of the great man's children. Having now told you all that is known of the real history of Judge Glanville, I shall proceed to mention a story tradition has connected with him, in which he is indeed made to bear a prominent and most painful part.

Before mentioning this, I deem it right to revert to the use I made of the story in a tale you have honoured me with reading, *Fitz of Fitzford*, a legend of Devon. I am more particularly induced to mention it here, because, *since* that tale appeared, many things in it, purely fictions, are *now* told as traditions of Tavistock! And such have in more than one instance been noticed in certain periodicals. I do not wish to mislead or to give rise to any falsehoods respecting our legends. Once then and for ever, to set the question at rest, I shall here state the *real traditions* of this neighbourhood on which I grounded my romance, and shall also give them in the very words in which I found them. No false stories can then hereafter arise.

It was in the beginning of the year 1827 that I chanced to find, amongst some papers relating to Tavistock, the copy of a letter addressed by Mr. Bray to the late Mr. Daniel Lysons, the author of the *Magna Britannia*, of which the *Devonshire* forms a part. Mr. Lysons had written to Mr. Bray to ask him certain questions, in addition to information before conveyed, respecting this place. The answer, of which I found a copy in my husband's own hand, is dated the 16th of January, 1819. Amongst other

matters of minor import, it contains the following story, with a few previous remarks. Here it is.

“From information which I have just obtained from an elderly lady (Miss Adams<sup>1</sup>), it should seem that the Glanvilles formerly resided at Holwell, in the parish of Whitchurch adjoining; and that the Judge removed thence to a house in Tavistock (Carter’s), which, she says, was part of the original palace of Ordulph (extending to Mrs. Rundle’s). Certainly an arched gateway is near part of it, much in the style of those belonging to the Abbey; and in another part a handsome wainscoted chamber, which she tells me was called King Edgar’s chamber; as also a tower apartment. The Judge afterwards built Kilworthy,<sup>2</sup> about a mile and a half from Tavistock, and occasionally resided in each.

“The Judge’s daughter was attached to George Stanwich, a young man of Tavistock, lieutenant of a man-of-war, whose letters, the father disapproving of the attachment, were intercepted. An old miser of Plymouth, of the name of Page, wishing to have an heir to disappoint his relations, who perhaps were too confident in calculating upon sharing his wealth, availed himself of this apparent neglect of the young sailor, and settling on her a good jointure obtained her hand. She took with her a maid-servant from Tavistock; but her husband was so penurious that he dismissed all the other servants, and caused his wife and her maid to do all the work themselves.

<sup>1</sup> Miss Adams died about nine years ago, at a very great age. She was a woman possessed of a strong mind, and the living record of whatever of history or tradition might be in any way connected with Tavistock.

<sup>2</sup> Prince, however, thinks Kilworthy was built by Sir John Glanville, son of the Judge.

On an interview subsequently taking place between her and Stanwich, she accused him of neglecting to write to her; and then discovered that his letters had been intercepted. The maid advised them to get rid of the old gentleman, and Stanwich at length, with great reluctance, consented to their putting an end to him. Page lived in what was afterwards the Mayoralty House (at Plymouth), and a woman who lived opposite hearing at night some sand thrown against a window, thinking it was her own, arose, and looking out, saw a young gentleman near Page's window, and heard him say, 'For God's sake stay your hand!' A female replied, 'Tis too late; the deed is done.' On the following morning it was given out that Page had died suddenly in the night, and as soon as possible he was buried. On the testimony, however, of his neighbour, the body was taken up again; and it appearing that he had been strangled, his wife, Stanwich, and the maid, were tried and executed. It is current among the common people here, that *Fudge Glanville, her own father, pronounced her sentence.*"<sup>3</sup>

On reading this dismal story in Mr. Bray's letter, it instantly struck me that with some alterations, additions, &c., it might be made a groundwork for the plot of a romance that would admit descriptive scenes of this town and neighbourhood. And the more I thought of it, the more I felt desirous to execute the plan I had formed. At the same time

<sup>3</sup> In the 92nd Number of the *Quarterly Review*, January, 1832, in the review of Collier's *History of the English Drama*, I saw it stated that, before Shakspeare wrote his plays, it was the custom of the time to dramatise any remarkable incident which occurred in the country. Mr. Collier mentions one of these incidental dramas to have been *The Lamentable Tragedy of Page of Plymouth*.

it struck me that if I could unite with it a second plot, founded on the true story of Sir John Fitz, recorded by Prince, it would heighten the interest, and increase the opportunities that would occur for scenes of a dramatic character. I next turned to (what I shall soon give) the story of Sir John Fitz, and saw that it would do.

That of Page required, I thought, considerable alteration. It would make the tale too horrible too much of the 'raw-head and bloody-bones' order, to have the wife kill her husband in the progress of the piece. I determined, therefore, that the deed should have been done years before the opening of the narrative; that two of the parties concerned should have escaped immediate justice (Stanwich and the maid), and that the miserable consequences of their crimes, both to themselves and others, should form the groundwork of my story, as those consequences might arise in the course of the work. I had some doubt as to the way in which I should draw the character of the maid who had urged the wife of Page to commit the murder. That she must be very wicked was a thing of course; but a common serving damsel would hardly suit with dramatic effect the particular kind of scenes I wished to represent. She ought to be raised something above the common order, so that it would not be incongruous to make her speak English instead of Devonshire. She ought, I fancied, to have a *genius for wickedness*; and to carry about her something to excite terror as well as abhorrence. What name to call her was also another point. "Call her," said Mr. Bray, "Betsy Grimal: that name is formidable enough for any such character as you wish to draw; and, moreover, Betsy Grimal

is not unknown to tradition ; though all that is told of her is that she, instead of committing a murder, was herself murdered. She is said to have been killed by a soldier in the spiral stairs of the tower flanking the old archway in our garden. Hence that tower bears her name. The stains on the wall, called her blood, used sadly to frighten me when I was a child."

It was agreed that Betsy Grimbal was therefore to become the guilty associate and attendant of Page's wife, and to play a busy and prominent part in the story. And as I wished as much as possible to combine every fragment of tradition, or to derive some hint from it, that would suggest incident and character, even the slightest legend of old times was not to be neglected. It struck me that I could make Lady Howard into a character. All I knew of her then was that she bore the reputation of having been hard-hearted in her lifetime : that for some crime she had committed (nobody knew what) she was said to be doomed to run in the shape of a hound from the *gateway of Fitzford* to Okehampton Park, between the hours of midnight and cock-crowing, and to return with a single blade of grass in her mouth whence she started ; and this she was to do till every blade was picked, when the world would be at an end.

Dr. Jago, the clergyman of Milton Abbot, however, told me that occasionally she was said to ride in *a coach of bones* up the West-street towards the Moor ; and an old man of this place told a friend of mine the same story, only adding that "*he had seen her in it scores of times !*" A lady also who was once a resident here, and whom I met in company, assured

me that, happening many years before to pass the old gateway at Fitzford, in returning from a party, as the church clock struck *twelve*, she had herself *seen the hound start*! Now I verily believe the lady told truth; for my husband's father, many years ago, rented Fitzford; it was the residence of his hind or bailiff, and there the late Mr. Bray used to keep a pack of hounds: it is, therefore, nothing improbable that one of them might have slipped the kennel, and ran out as the church clock struck twelve, and so personated in the eyes of imagination the terrific spectre of the old tale. My husband can remember that when a boy it was a common saying with the gentry at a party—"It is growing late, let us begone, or we shall meet Lady Howard as she starts from Fitzford."

The above anecdotes were all I knew about her when I determined to make her take a part in my story; but *the hound*, *the gateway*, and *the coach of bones*, were all fine hints for imagination to work upon. I walked down to Fitzford with Mr. Bray and reconnoitred the spot, and there, such is the bewitching power of locality, all seemed to rush at once into my mind. The plot was formed with ease, and I went home determined to connect the adventure of Fitz and Slanning, under the gateway, with Lady Howard; to give her a real hound, a *bloodhound*, instead of turning her into one; and then the coach of bones, and her riding in it after death, might be made a legend, in consequence of a great crime which by an evil passion she had been led to determine on committing, whilst riding in her own coach in all her pride, to the house of the person she had it in view to betray to ruin here on earth. This rude sketch of



a plot was soon worked into shape and committed to paper. Mr. Bray named the hound *Redfang*, as a significant appellative for a dog whose instinct was to become the agency in assisting to bring about the catastrophe. I had never seen a bloodhound, and I wished to be correct in describing one. Here fortune favoured me again; for the younger Lewis, the animal painter, in a few days arrived at our house. I ventured to tell him my wishes, and he very good-naturedly made me a most spirited sketch of a bloodhound; for he had painted one from life, I think he said, in Scotland. From that drawing I described Redfang, and Mr. Lewis's account of the habits and instinct of the animal was of great service.

The character of the Jew was suggested by our acquaintance with a most honest Israelite, a German, Mr. Rosenthal, who used to come to the vicarage to teach Mr. Bray Hebrew. The terms of instruction he left to Mr. Bray; and when the time came for payment, actually wanted to return him some part of the money, insisting that he ought not to be paid so much for his lessons. There was so much mildness, feeling, and gratitude about poor Rosenthal, that I endeavoured minutely to observe him, and to sketch him in Levi, as a very different sort of character to what we generally expect to find in a Jew. I believe I have here stated every fragment of tradition that suggested to me any name, character, or incident in the tale, excepting the real story of Fitz; which, as it is the principal, and the one after which I called the work, I here conclude with giving exactly as I found it in Prince's *Worthies of Devon*.

"John Fitz, of Fitz-ford, Esquire, was in his time a very eminent counsellor at law; in demonstration

thereof" (continues this biographer, after giving the list of his generations) "is a large volume he is said to have left behind him in manuscript, called 'Fitz his Reports.' I think it was never printed; and whether yet in being I know not. He was also preferred, in his time, to the honour and trust of being high sheriff of the county of Devon, an. 23d, some say an. 25th, of Queen Elizabeth's reign. He married Mary, daughter of Sir John Sydenham, of Brimton, in Somersetshire; but was very unfortunate in his issue, of which there is this remarkable story. Mr. Fitz being a curious as well as a learned person, had been prying into the secrets of astrology; his lady being with child, he would needs be inquiring into the fortune of her burthen before she was delivered; who, being just ready to fall into travail, he erected a scheme to calculate the matter; and as it often falls out in such unjustifiable curiosities, finding at that time a very unlucky position of the heavens, he desired the midwife, if possible, to hinder the birth but for one hour, which not being to be done, he declared that the child would come to an unhappy end, and undo his family. And it fell out accordingly, for that birth proving a son, though afterwards knighted by the name of Sir John Fitz of Fitz-ford, yet having first slain Sir Nicholas Slanning of this county, Kt., and after that one or two more, he fell upon his own sword, and destroyed himself."

In a notice respecting the family of Slanning, Prince thus states the circumstance more at large. "This gentleman came to an untimely end, being slain in a quarrel that happened between him and Sir John Fitz, near Tavistock, in this county. The matter, it seems, was likely to have been composed,

but the villain, Fitz's man, twitting his master with a 'What, play child's play! Come to fight, and now put up your sword!' made him draw again, and Slanning's foot in stepping back (having his spurs on) hitching in the ground, was there, unfortunately and foully, killed: whereupon Sir John Fitz, by the interest of his friends, sued out his pardon soon after this happened, which was in 1599. But although Queen Elizabeth was pleased to forgive him, Slanning's widow would not; but brought her appeal, and obtained a verdict against Sir John for damages, who thereupon was forced to comply with her, by granting some part of his estate to her and her family, who are still in possession of it."

"After this," continues Prince, "as one sin became (as oftentimes it doth) the punishment of another, Sir John was so unhappy to be guilty of a second murder; and thereupon flying from his county (though not from his own guilty conscience) so far as Salisbury, or thereabouts, in his way to London, to sue out a second pardon, hearing somebody about his chamber-door early in the morning, and fearing it had been officers come to apprehend him, by mistake in the dark he slew one of the house come to wake him, as he desired, in order to his journey. When the lights came that made him sensible of the horrid and atrocious fact which he had afresh committed, overwhelmed with sorrow and despair, he fell upon his own sword and slew himself. Unto which passage that tetrastick formerly found upon this monument, now nearly expunged by the finger of time, doth plainly relate, where Sir Nicholas Slanning, by an apostrophe, speaketh thus of Fitz:—

"Idem cædis erat nostræ, simul author et ultor ;  
 Trux homicida mei, mox homicida sui.  
 Quemque in me primum, mox in se condidit ensem :  
 O ! nostrum summi Judicis arbitrium."

Prince has thus closely rendered it in English :—

"He author of my murder was, and the revenger too :  
 A bloody murderer of me, and then himself he slew.  
 The very sword which in mine first, he bathed his own blood.  
 O ! of the highest Judge 'twixt us, the arbitration good !"

Mr. Bray has rendered it thus :—

"I in my murderer my avenger found,  
 Who dealt to both the homicidal wound :  
 For, of just heaven the retribution due,  
 Me, and himself, by the same sword he slew."

The first part of the above melancholy tale I followed closely in my novel, and represented the old lawyer engaged in his astrological pursuits, and alarmed for the fate he had so darkly predicted respecting his only son. The latter part was too full of horrors ; and therefore, blending fiction with truth, I ventured to create a cause for the quarrel between Slanning and Sir John Fitz that should be connected with the leading incidents of the story even from its opening ; and instead of John Fitz killing three persons, I thought one would be quite enough, and so concluded much according to the real narrative. Tradition marks the old gateway of Fitzford, still in existence, as the scene of the fatal duel and the spot where Slanning fell.

Respecting Sir John, or 'Old Page,' I am informed by Mr. Hughes (who is well acquainted with many locally interesting stories and traditions), that he was an eminent merchant in his day, commonly called 'wealthy Page.' He lived in Woolster Street, Ply-

mouth, in the house since known by the name of the Mayoralty. It stood untouched till the rebuilding of the Guildhall, when it was taken down. The old house was long an object of curiosity on account of the atrocious murder there committed. Mr. Hughes likewise tells me that some years ago, previous to the repairs of St. Andrew's Church, Plymouth, Page's coffin was discovered, on breaking the ground near the communion table for the interment of a lady named Lovell. The inscription on the coffin proved it to contain the body of the 'wealthy Page.' It was opened; the remains were found in a remarkably perfect state, but crumbled to dust on being exposed to the air. So great was the curiosity of the populace, that during several days hundreds pressed in to gratify it, and every relic that could be stolen, if but a nail from the coffin, was carried off.

There is no authority but that of tradition in support of the assertion that the wife of Page was one of the daughters of Judge Glanville, and received sentence of death from the lips of her own father. Supposing the story to be true, Prince has carefully suppressed it. I am, however, disposed to think it is not true; as my venerable friend, the Rev. Richard Polwhele, of Polwhele, Cornwall (descended from the judge by the marriage of his daughter *Dionysia* with a Polwhele), writes me word—that though he had heard his grandmother tell the story of Glanville passing the sentence on his own child, it was not, even in her time, considered true. It strikes me, after a careful examination of whatever circumstance could throw light on the subject, that some confusion, some mistake has arisen, in consequence of *another Devonshire judge* having really been placed in so

trying and painful a situation as that of sitting on the bench and passing sentence on his own son. I here give the circumstance from Prince.

“So great a lover of justice was Judge Hody, that according to his oath, and the obligation of his honour, he most exactly administered it to all without favour or affection. A traditionary confirmation whereof in the family I crave leave here to relate, not as redounding to the disparagement of that, but the high honour of this grand justiciary. ’Tis said when his son Thomas was tried before him at the public assizes, and found guilty by his country of a capital crime, he with his own mouth pronounced sentence of death upon him. For which reason, ’tis observed, there hath not ever since been any of the name Thomas in this family. And when the unfortunate son, overwhelmed with sorrow and melancholy, killed himself the next night after, the father, esteeming him degenerate, would not so much as honour his funeral with his presence.”

This Judge Hody lived in the reigns of Henry VII. and VIII., and I cannot help thinking that the above story about his son has given rise to a similar tradition about Glanville and his daughter. For though Prince says in another part of his curious and ingenious work, that he “liketh not to tell old tales that are disreputable to honourable families, and therefore leaveth them unnoticed whenever he can do so;” yet we see he does tell the tale about Judge Hody’s son; why, therefore, suppress that of Glanville’s eldest or youngest daughter, had it been true? If true or false, so striking a tradition was quite sufficient authority for a writer of romance; and as it afforded a good subject for imagination to work upon,

both in character and incident, I felt fully justified in making Glanville a judge who had passed sentence on his own daughter, in my story.

I should much like to see the old play (mentioned by Collier in his *History of the Drama*) called the *Lamentable Tragedy of Page of Plymouth*, as that would most likely settle the question; for it cannot be supposed that a circumstance of so impressive a nature, and known to all the kingdom, would have been passed unnoticed by the dramatist, whoever he might have been; and as it was the fashion of the time to dramatise any remarkable incidents that occurred in real life, a feeling of delicacy would not have been dreamt of to prevent it, though Judge Glanville was then alive, since it could be no more shocking to his feelings to represent the act in which he performed a painful duty, than to bring forward that in which his daughter was seen acting the crime of murder in its most atrocious form.

There is another and a very interesting tale respecting a son of Judge Glanville: this is recorded by Prince; and I once entertained the idea of founding on it a story, as one of a series of tales that should attempt to bring into play all the most interesting legends of this part of England, as I think many of them are not less worthy of notice than the legends of Scotland and Wales. The striking circumstances to which I now allude are connected with Kilworthy; but before I relate them, I must commence in regular order a sketch of the life of Sir John Glanville, of which they form a part.

"Sir John Glanville, Serjeant-at-Law, was born," says Prince, "at Tavistock, that fruitful seed-plot of eminent and learned men in this county. He was

the second son of Judge Glanville, aforementioned, an honourable and worthy person."

This gentleman, like his father, had not the advantage of receiving his education at either of the universities. He was bred an attorney, but afterwards removing to Lincoln's Inn, with the help of his father's notes he became skilled in his profession. For some time he practised as a counsellor, and his reputation increasing with his years, he was at length elected recorder of Plymouth, and served as burgess for that town in several parliaments. In the fifth of King Charles I. he was chosen Lent Reader of his house, and in 1637 advanced to the rank of Serjeant-at-Law. About this time he had the honour of becoming Speaker to the House of Commons. Clarendon, who mentions the circumstance, says he was "a man very equal to the work, very well acquainted with the proceedings in parliaments, of a quick conception, and of a ready, voluble expression, dexterous in disposing the House, and very acceptable to them." Glanville, who more than once, in his character of burgess for Plymouth, had been little friendly to the prerogative of the Crown, nevertheless, on seeing to what extremities the factious and discontented were disposed to carry all things in their efforts to subvert the Church, the monarchy, and the laws, proved himself active in their defence; and so worthily did he conduct the affairs of the House in its first meeting, 1640, when, after a long interval, the King had again summoned a parliament, that in the following year he received the honour of knighthood from the hand of that beloved master.

It is not a little remarkable, that though he filled the office of Speaker at a time when the most stormy



debates were carried on, and often interposed his authority to maintain the rules and order of proceeding, which so many were disposed to subvert, his popularity remained unshaken, and he was held in universal respect, though known to have the King's interest at heart, and to be devoted to his service. Such is the respect which a man who acts conscientiously, and serves the cause of loyalty from a sense of its justice, will generally command, even from his enemies. Glanville lost no whit of that paid to him, till the factious became openly the rebellious, and war was proclaimed on either side. It was then that his enemies, who were the King's also, having him entirely within their own power, and finding he was not to be shaken, conferred on him the highest honour he had yet attained—that of being made a sufferer in a righteous cause.

Before matters, however, had arrived at an open rupture between the King and the Commons, Glanville particularly distinguished himself in the committee respecting subsidies, which, by a message through Sir Harry Vane, the unfortunate Charles had requested might be granted him in lieu of ship-money, adjudged to be his right, but which he would not insist upon, out of affection to his people, since they were unwilling to pay it. Deprived of these means by his own forbearance, he prayed the Parliament to grant the supplies that he found so absolutely necessary at such a crisis. This allusion to 'right' and 'ship-money' was exceedingly offensive to some of the more violent members; and after a sharp debate it was resolved to go again into committee of the whole House, and all present seemed to wish "that whatsoever," says Clarendon, "they should give the

King should be a free testimony of their affection and duty, without any release of ship-money, which deserved no consideration, but in a short time would appear null and void."

Hampden, the most popular and most wily man among them, and who had so lately defended the ship-money suit against the Crown, did not lose such a moment as this; and judging the subject ripe for the question, desired it might be put—"Whether the House would consent to the proposition made by the King, as it was contained in the message of Sir Harry Vane?" This he well knew would be sure to meet with a negative from all who thought the sum too great, and were not pleased that it should be given in lieu of ship-money, though the King had said nothing more than the whole House knew to be truth; namely, that it had been adjudged his right; and his offer to waive this right, from love to his people, would have been hailed as a proof of his desire to render them happy, and to conciliate them, by any other than men who had determined the poor King never should be right, till wrong had hurled him from the throne.

At this call of 'Question,' Serjeant Glanville (as one of the members only in committee) rose; and though he seldom spoke on such occasions, yet now, in what Clarendon calls 'a most pathetic speech,' in which he excelled, he endeavoured to prevail with the House to entertain freely and grant the King's desire, as an act that would prove of great benefit to the nation at large, inasmuch as it could not fail to reconcile his majesty to parliaments for ever, by a ready testimony of their affection. After having endeavoured to raise in his hearers a kind and dutiful

feeling towards the King, he next showed them, in the clearest manner, how very inconsiderable would be the subsidy to those, taken individually, by whose contributions it must be raised. The Serjeant had computed his own assessment: he named the sum to which it would amount; and all present knowing how large was his estate, and therefore that most men would have far less to pay, the matter appeared too insignificant to be worthy any more debating.

Glanville saw the powerful impression he had made by his eloquent appeal: he had stirred up some feeling of generosity towards the King; and had shown, by the simplest and most certain test—that of an arithmetical calculation—how little such generosity would really cost themselves. Willing, therefore, still further to conciliate them (and in this we see something of the lawyer as well as of the orator), he let the House know that, in matters of *law* affecting right, he was as jealous as themselves; and he let fall in his zeal some severe expressions against the impost of ship-money, and against the judgment lately given in its favour. “This,” says Clarendon, “from one known to be very learned, how necessary and artificial soever to reconcile the affections of the House to the matter in question, very much irreconciled him at Court, and to those upon whom he had the greatest dependence, though there was scarce ever a speech that more gathered up and united the inclinations of a popular council to the speaker; and if the question had been presently put, it was believed the number of the dissenters would not have appeared great.”

The failure of this affair of the subsidies, principally by the mismanagement and misrepresentation

of Sir Harry Vane, who so often betrayed the unhappy King, whilst pretending to serve him, caused the speedy dissolution of that parliament which Charles too soon had bitter cause to lament. Some factious spirits—Hampden, St. John, and Pym at their head—rejoiced at it; but all who wished well to the King and to the country saw that, taken in the aggregate, such a number of dispassionate and well-intentioned men would not be returned again; and that in another house which Charles would too soon be obliged to call, the factious would return no representatives but such as were willing to go all lengths with the evil spirits of the times. Dissolving a parliament such as this, at a crisis when the elements of rebellion were gathering strength, and combining their several powers before the bursting of the storm, was, on the part of the King, as great an act of temerity as it would have been for the captain of a vessel to cut away his cables, and send the ship out of port to buffet before the tempest, amidst rocks and shoals, when by keeping in harbour, though the gale might sing in the shrouds and beat upon her, it could not have force sufficient to drive her from her moorings, or to make her the wreck of its unmitigable fury. Charles never recovered that false step of ill-advised policy; and when he was forced to leave the treasonable parliament which he afterwards called, and which but too soon hastened his ruin, his faithful Speaker, Glanville, followed him to Oxford, where he devoted all the energies of a mind naturally energetic to the service of his prince.

At Oxford, with some other loyalists of great merit, in a public Convocation, he was created Doctor of Civil Law, in 1643. And being now considered by

the rebels 'a desperate malignant,' in the year 1645 they disabled him from sitting as a member at Westminster. Shortly after returning to his own home in Devon, the King's cause no sooner declined in the West than he was seized and committed to prison (probably at Exeter), and there remained a long while in captivity—an honourable example of how patiently and how cheerfully a good cause can enable a man to suffer the greatest injuries. He was not released till the year 1648, when he bought his liberty by a heavy fine being laid on his estates. Loyd, in his *Loyal Sufferers*, gives the highest character of Glanville; and from him we learn that this imprisonment was not the first to which the Serjeant had been exposed.

He states that Glanville's first durance was on shipboard, in 1626, for having spoken his mind too freely on some points respecting the prerogative; that afterwards he suffered six several hard imprisonments (one of which was two years in the Tower of London) for declaring himself "as honestly in some law points against a treasonable popularity;" and so high did his character stand in the estimation of all men, that, notwithstanding his so recent captivity, the University of Oxford, ever honourable and consistent, even under the most dangerous circumstances and times, was bold enough to return Sir John Glanville as her burgess in one of the parliaments held in the days of the usurper. But Glanville's attachment to the exiled family of the murdered King was known to be unshaken; he was not, therefore, suffered to take his seat. His spirit undaunted by those who in this arbitrary manner had opposed his just election, and determined, if it could

not aid him in asserting the rights of the injured in the general assembly of his countrymen, that he would defend them as long as one law remained unsubverted to bear him out, he now pleaded openly as a lawyer the causes of many a banished Royalist ; amongst others those of Lord Craven and Sir John Stawel : the latter being a prisoner, and particularly obnoxious to many who then held the reins of government in their own hands.

To the honour of this truly great man, be it also spoken that he possessed that most certain mark of superior merit, both of head and heart—the power to distinguish it in others, and the will to bring it forward with honour and success. It was Serjeant Glanville who first appreciated the then obscure talents of Sir Matthew Hale—obscure by fortune, by the want of opportunity, and doubly so by an idle course of life. This fault he represented to Hale in strong terms, roused his energies, encouraged his perseverance, and opened to him that path by which he afterwards rose to so much dignity and repute.

The story I am now about to relate, the truth of which there is no cause to doubt, opens to us the character of Glanville in its most amiable light. In reflecting on it we feel that glow of pleasure which both young and old experience whilst they listen to a deed of heroic generosity in the days of chivalry, when men were heroes because they were Christians, and thought no action could be worthy the honour of a knight that was not founded on the high principles and true glory emanating from their obedience to God, to his Church here on earth, and to their anointed King.

Judge Glanville, the possessor of that fair estate of

Kilworthy, so often spoken of in this letter, intended to settle it on his son Francis, as the elder born, who was to bear the honours of his house, and to convey them unsullied to his posterity; but Francis disappointed his hopes. He proved idle and vicious; and, like the prodigal in the gospel, would leave his father's house to herd among swine, for such are the low and the wicked. Seeing there was no prospect of his amendment, the Judge gave the inheritance of the elder to the younger born, and settled his estate on John, afterwards Serjeant Glanville.

Francis, on his father's death, finding those threats which had been occasionally held out to induce him to reform his wild career were fully executed (for he had never really believed them to be other than threats), was overcome with grief and dismay. He was the elder born—the natural heritor of the estate; and he, like Esau, had sold his birthright for dishonour. This reflection, and the thought that his father had died in too just anger towards him, so wrought on a mind in which there lay hid strong, though hitherto perverted, feelings, that he became melancholy. Riot could no longer soothe the pangs of conscience; and when, like the prodigal, all was gone, instead of giving himself up to utter despair, he wisely returned to God, as to an offended and only Father, his earthly parent being alike removed either from his sorrows or his repentance. Good resolutions are the guides to virtue, but practice is the path; and that must be followed with an unwearied step. Frank Glanville, having once set his foot in the way, did not turn back; and so steadily did he advance in his progress on the right road, that what his father could never do with him whilst he lived, and the spendthrift

entertained the expectation of being his heir, he now did for himself, when he was little better than an outcast from his early home: his life became completely changed.

Sir John Glanville, his younger brother, wishing to prove him before he gave him better countenance, for some time left him to himself, till he felt convinced his brother's penitence was as lasting as it was sincere: he then sent and invited him to be present at a feast that he purposed making for his friends in the halls of Kilworthy. The most sumptuous preparations were made; the banquet was set forth with all the liberal hospitality of the time; the guests assembled were numerous and honourable; and music sounded through the halls its varied and most enlivening notes.

Sir John Glanville took the repentant prodigal by the hand, seated him at the table, and, after many dishes had been served, ordered one that was covered to be set before his brother Francis; and then with a cheerful countenance bade him raise the cover. Francis did so. All present were surprised on seeing that the dish contained nothing but written parchments; whereupon Sir John Glanville, wishing all his friends to know the respect in which he now held his repentant brother, and at the same time with that true generosity which seeks to lighten the obligation it confers by lessening its merit, told Francis, and those who were assembled, that what he now did was only the same act that he felt assured would have been performed by his father, could he have lived to witness the happy change which they all knew had taken place in his eldest son: therefore as in honour bound he freely restored to him the whole estate.



The scene that followed may be readily imagined ; the 'lost that was found' fell on his brother's neck and wept aloud, and if there was one heart in that assembly more than all the rest rejoicing in the general joy, it was the heart of the generous, the noble, the just brother, who now most truly felt the force of these words of the Lord of life : " It is more blessed to give than to receive."

It is honourable to both brothers that Francis proved deserving of being thus restored to his inheritance ; he lived to receive the distinction of knighthood from the hand of Charles II. Sir John Glanville's generosity is a proof that the truly great in public duties are not less so in private ones ; indeed I should ever doubt that man's claim to patriotism and public virtue, who could be unjust, arrogant, or arbitrary in the relations of domestic life. Sir Francis Glanville some years after married Elizabeth, the daughter of William Crymes, Esq., of Devon, and left a son named Francis, who died without issue : in consequence of which his estates came to his sister's only daughter, by her husband, Mr. William Kelly, and she married Ambrose Manaton, Esq., which caused the noble mansion of Kilworthy to pass into that family.<sup>4</sup>

Sir John, or Serjeant Glanville, whom I consider not only one of the greatest men born in Tavistock,

<sup>4</sup> The Manatons were very celebrated persons, of honourable repute, who for generations kept up the old style of hospitality and kindness to their friends and tenantry. An old house, with the crest of a unicorn rampant upon the ornamental parts of the front, still points out their town residence in Tavistock. Their beautiful old-fashioned service of pewter plates, dishes, &c., was a few years since sold by auction. Mr. Bray's mother bought it, and we now possess the grand Manaton service, decorated with arms and unicorn.

but one whose virtues render him an honour to the kingdom at large, lived to see monarchy restored : he was favourably received, as he deserved to be, by Charles II., on his accession to his father's throne, and was appointed King's Serjeant. In all probability he would have risen to yet higher honours had not God, who endowed him so largely on earth with his richest gift, a truly noble spirit, conferred upon it that immortality which must have been its highest reward, in the year 1661. He was buried in the church of Broad Hinton, in Wilts ; where he resided for some time before his death. His widow, Winifred, placed a monument over his grave, with an inscription, in which even monumental praise could scarcely equal his merit.

Whilst employed in the agreeable task of penning this slight sketch of his life, Mr. Charles Crapp, a respectable mercer of this town, had the kindness to send me a very curious manuscript in his possession, which he highly values, giving an account of the lands disposed for charitable purposes in the parish of Tavistock. In this manuscript I find an entry, dated 29th March, 1649, stating that our good Serjeant did give in trust to certain gentlemen of this place, all named, the tenement called South Brent Tor, to the intent that the rent or profits of the said estate shall be thus disposed of :—That “ the feoffees, their heirs, assigns, and successors, or the most of them that will be present in the school-house on Friday in the Easter week, between the hours of ten and eleven, do elect a towardly youth, born of honest parents within the said borough, whose parents or friends are poor, and without deceit reputed to be unable to maintain such boy, and to dispose the profits for his maintenance at

one of the *universities*; and when all the feoffees (trustees) are dead but eight, the survivors must renew the estate to others, of which the eight masters of the town and parish must be of them."

The manuscript (which contains a long list of charitable donations) says—"N.B. These abstracts were taken out of the new feoffment deeds, dated 21st August, 1738."

To conclude: as Sir John Glanville was a man of virtue and talents himself, so, as we have seen, was he the friend to both in others. His works were principally of a political nature. Some of his parliamentary speeches may be found in Rushworth's *Collection*. The following lines are the only fragment of his poetry that I have ever had the good fortune to meet with. They are addressed to his accomplished friend and brother-townsmen Browne, the author of *Britannia's Pastorals*.

"Ingenious swaine! that highly dost adorn  
Clear Tavy, on whose brinck we both were borne!  
Just praise in me would ne'er be thought to move  
From thy sole worth, but from thy partiall love:  
Wherefore I will not do thee so much wrong,  
As by such mixture to alloy thy song.  
But while kind strangers rightly praise each grace  
Of thy chaste muse, I (from the happy place  
That brought thee forth, and thinks it not unfit  
To boast now that it erst bred such a wit)  
Would only have it knowne I much rejoyce  
To hear such matters sung by such a voice."

JOHN GLANVILLE.

The sons of Serjeant Glanville were also distinguished for talent and worth. One of them, John, was a barrister-at-law, who rose to great eminence in his profession: he married a daughter of Sir Edmund

Fortescue, of Fallapit, Devon; and at length retired to Broad Hinton, where he died, and was buried near his father.

Another son of the Serjeant was even yet more eminent, though his career was as brief as it was glorious. He was a youth of the greatest promise, and possessed talents which, had he been longer spared, could not have failed to become alike honourable and useful to himself and to society. But bearing in his breast a high and martial spirit, he could not brook standing idly looking on when the King was hard pressed by his enemies. He joined the royal cause, and in the rank of lieutenant-colonel maintained the town of Bridgwater against the tremendous assault that was made against it by the Parliamentary forces. In this action he showed wonderful gallantry and courage; and being resolute to keep the town till the last, he, with several other gentlemen of like spirit, fell covered with wounds and honour in the twenty-eighth year of his age, on the fatal 20th of July, 1645. Thus perished Francis Glanville the younger. Where he was buried is not certainly known; but most likely the body was removed from Bridgwater, as the Royalists generally begged their dead might be restored when they were persons of eminence. Some years after, a monument was erected to his memory in the church of Broad Hinton.

Joseph Glanville, chaplain-in-ordinary to Charles II., and author of the famous book on *Wytches*, was born at Plymouth; and I only slightly mention him here, because he was a branch from the ancient Kilworthy stock of Glanville. Not being of our parish, it is not my place to write his life; yet I

cannot forbear mentioning that, in addition to many other works, he left a posthumous volume of sermons that are of the highest merit, and breathe the lofty spirit of those glorious old divines which render the reign of Charles II. as remarkable for the learning, the piety, the genius, and the exemplary conduct of the clergy, as it was depraved and infamous in that of the morals of the King and of the Court. These sermons have become very scarce; Mr. Bray is so fortunate as to possess a copy of them. Their characteristic is energy; the authority of the Church is maintained with a dignity that becomes the subject, and the boldest arguments (though they must have been little pleasing to many hearers of his day) are brought forward and enforced with the most powerful eloquence of feeling and of truth.

It is melancholy to relate—such are the changes of time and fortune—that the last descendant of the *elder* branch of the illustrious family of Glanville died a very few years ago in the poor-house at Bradstone, in this neighbourhood. He was a huntsman, and known by the name of Jack Glanville. From all I can learn about him, he appears to have been an original character; possessed of a good deal of sense, and some humour; and valued himself on his blood, of which he considered there was none nobler in the whole county of Devon. When I heard of the obscure state in which he was brought up and died, I could not help thinking what a fit object he would have been in early life to have profited by the charitable bequest of his good and great ancestor, the Serjeant. A university education might have rescued the last of the line from debasement and poverty, and have once more restored it to an honourable place in

the families of Devon. But he is dead and gone, the elder line extinct; and it is but one more example that there is no permanence in the families of the great, but that which is found in the merit and virtues of the individuals that compose them.

Tavistock also gave birth to the celebrated Sir John Maynard, Serjeant-at-Law. His father, Alexander, was a younger branch of the Maynards of Brixton, and removing to Tavistock, he resided in a house that stood on the site of the Abbey, where his son John was born. The character and fame of Maynard are so intimately connected with the history of this county, that they can alone be appreciated by those who render themselves familiar with the stirring events of the years in which he lived. In the times of Charles I., though Clarendon says "he had too much complied and concurred with their irregular and unjust proceedings," he nevertheless argued stoutly against the treasonable measure of voting in the house that no more appeals or addresses be made to the King. During the struggle between popery and protestantism in the reign of James II. he stood firm, and throughout his long life he was not less distinguished for his integrity in public affairs than he was for his profound legal skill. He frequently took his seat in the house as member for Beeralston, a small town that was first represented in the reign of Elizabeth.

Little is recorded of Maynard's private life, but that little is to his honour. He was of a munificent disposition, and managed with great care and prudence the large sums of which he became trustee, for various charities, on the death of the donor, his friend Mr. Elizeus Hele. He also from his own estate devoted

a considerable sum to the uses of charity. He lived to a very great age; and after the landing of King William, when presented at court, the King on being told that Sir John Maynard was upwards of ninety years old, observed to him that he must have outlived all the judges and eminent men of his day. "Yes," replied the veteran lawyer, "and I should have outlived the laws too, if it had not been for the happy arrival of your majesty."

Sir John Maynard died in 1690, and was succeeded in his large possessions by a son, who bequeathed them to his two daughters in default of male issue; both ladies were nobly married, the one into the house of Hobart, Earl of Buckinghamshire, and the other to the Earl of Stamford. Where Serjeant Maynard was buried I do not know; there is no monument to him in our church, and his name is totally forgotten in the place; not the slightest tradition exists concerning him, which induces me to believe that he never resided at Tavistock after his entrance on public life.

#### LYDFORD CASCADE AND CASTLE.

It has just occurred to me, that I have omitted sending some notice of a most interesting spot in our neighbourhood; I therefore add, by way of post-script, the following extract from an old Journal of Mr. Bray:—

"The path that leads to the cascade winds down a steep coppice-wood; and the descent to the river Lyd, that flows beneath, is not a little difficult, being nearly covered with loose stones that slide under one at every step. But before the foot encounters these

dangers, the eye may be gratified with a striking view of the tower and Castle of Lydford, backed by the distant hills of Dartmoor, at the end of a deep ravine, formed by the interjunction of several woody promontories.

“At the bottom of the hill, after walking a short distance by the side of the Lyd, on turning round a projecting rock, the cascade bursts suddenly upon the sight. The surprise is for a while kept up by the



LYDFORD CASCADE.

appearance of such a continuity of foam rushing from so precipitous a height. To this the native blackness of the rock, rendered more so by the glossiness of humidity, forms a striking contrast. But ere long reflection shows the defects that did not at first present themselves. The fall is too perpendicular to be picturesque; and the space in front is so confined that you can hardly get either on the one side or the other to throw it into an oblique direction. It



is not sufficiently wide, nor broken ; there being only one place, as seen from below, where there is any projection of the water. And the stream is generally so small that it merely trickles down the rock, unless increased by rains, or discharged in a torrent from the sluice above ; for it is nothing but a mill-stream that is thus hurried from a woody height into the river Lyd beneath. Some years ago the trees, which have been since cut down and are succeeded by a kind of low coppice-wood, served in a degree to break it, and certainly greatly added to the beauty of the scene.

“ In order to form an idea of the real height of the cascade, I forced my way through the bushes, and over some boggy ground, to the spot where what may be properly considered as the fall begins. It is a narrow channel between the summits of two woody promontories. That on the left terminates in a perpendicular rock about thirty feet above the stream. To avoid this obstacle we crossed the water and climbed up the opposite side. By the assistance of the boughs, for the whole is a coppice-wood, we let ourselves down on a rock about twenty feet from the head of the cascade, at the bottom of what may be called the first fall. Here the water flows down the surface of a smooth sloping rock, almost in a regular curve ; within which is a deep hollow recess, which I at first thought the entrance to a cave, but found that it reached very little within the sloping rock above described. A tree, throwing itself across from the opposite side of this recess, added much to the effect, which was not a little increased by the fern and other pendent plants nodding on the top.

“ At this spot my servant tied a cord to one of

the branches of the trees, and descended by the side of the stream, whilst I remained to untie it when he should give the signal by shaking it. This being given, I followed him and found for about fifty feet the channel is sinuous and broken. Here, as there is almost a straight and smooth descent, we threw the lead into the midst of the water, and it was carried down with the utmost rapidity to the top of the last fall, the distance of about one hundred feet.

"The effect of the cascade is here particularly striking, as you see an unbroken continuance of foam descending in a straight line, till, by leaping over a more perpendicular fall, it is lost to the eye, and the scene terminated by the flat and narrow dingle through which the river finds its way below. The scene was altogether so novel as hardly to appear natural, but seemed as if it were inverted by reflexion, and not much unlike the effect produced by bending the head so as to see objects with the eye almost upside down. The last fall is about sixty feet, so that the whole height, according to my calculation, is about two hundred and thirty feet; of course, however, a deduction must be made from this oblique direction to bring it to its perpendicular or real height.

"On ascending by the regular path through the coppice, I could not but take a farewell look at the fall below. About half way up the path deviates to the bottom of a rock, where you catch through the trees a view of the cascade in its greatest impetuosity; and, at a considerable depth beneath, the same stream peaceably pursuing its course to join the Lyd, small in itself, and still more diminished by the distance.

“Lydford Bridge is, perhaps, a greater object of curiosity than the waterfall, from which it is distant about half a mile ; as few bridges are so romantically situated, or built over so deep a chasm ; while there are probably cascades innumerable of equal height, and certainly of greater quantity of water.

“It is not seen till the traveller, at a turn of the road, is almost upon it ; and many it is said have passed it without knowing it was the object of their search. Camden tells us that ‘the water is not to be seen, but only the murmur to be heard.’ This is not the case at present ; though a few years since, indeed, before some trees were cut down, it was so overhung with branches and their shade, that the stream below could scarcely be distinguished. By this obscurity also, a greater impression no doubt was made upon the mind, and the imagination was easily misled into exaggeration.

“By destroying them, particularly on the north-east side of the river, another disadvantage has ensued ; for, holding by their branches and resting against their trunks, it was possible to let one’s self down so as to have a view of the bridge overhead, and the water dashing amid the rocks beneath. It is best seen now from a field on the south-west side, through some trees, whence may be discerned the bridge covered with ivy hanging in wild luxuriance, the narrow and broken chasm, with some trees starting from its sides, and the water foaming below through its rocky channel. On the left hand Lydford tower opportunely presents itself to improve and identify the picture.

“Mr. Polwhele presents us with many different descriptions of the bridge, as well as the cascade

at Lydford, but almost all of them greatly exaggerated. Risdon, as quoted by him, speaking of the river beneath, says, 'It maketh such a hideous noise, that, being only heard and not seen, it causeth a kind of fear to the passengers, seeming to them that look down to it a deep abyss, and may be numbered amongst the wonders of this kingdom.'

"A person is said to have arrived at Lydford in the middle of the night, to the great astonishment of the inhabitants, on finding from him that he came from the direction of the bridge, as they knew it had been lately broken down. The traveller, however, had remarked nothing more than that his horse had made a sudden spring; but on being afterwards led to the tremendous chasm, he was struck with a mingled sensation of horror, surprise, and thankfulness at the danger he had so providentially escaped.

"Another remarkable occurrence happened not many years since on the same spot. Captain Williams having formed the dreadful resolution of destroying himself, rode from Exeter, late at night, to Lydford Bridge, and endeavoured to spur his horse over the parapet, as was afterwards discovered by the marks of its shoes on the stones; but finding his efforts useless he turned the horse adrift, and, in hopes to conceal the deed, threw the saddle and bridle over the bridge, and followed afterwards himself. But, as the former became entangled in the branches of the trees, they soon led to a discovery, and the body of the unfortunate sufferer was found among the rocks below.

"Lydford,<sup>5</sup> that hardly deserves now even the name

<sup>5</sup> Lydford, or Lyghatford, was a town of some note during the Saxon Heptarchy. Among 'specimens of the names of places from the *Saxon Chronicle*,' Polwhele has 'Illidaford, Lids-ford, Lidford.'

of a village, was a place of such antiquity and consequence as, according to tradition, to have entertained Julius Cæsar and his whole army on his second arrival in this island. But in the year 997 it was spoiled and ravaged by the Danes, at the time they pillaged and burnt the Abbey of Tavistock and laid siege to Exeter.

“It recovered, however, from their inhuman depredations, and in the time of the Conqueror had one hundred and twenty-two, or according to others, one hundred and forty burgesses. Lydford sent members in the twenty-eighth and thirtieth of Edward I. Indeed it appears by Domesday Book that it was wont to be taxed at the same time, and after the same manner, with London itself.

“And as a proof of its importance, the custody of the Castle was generally committed to persons of the greatest quality. It is the largest parish in the county, or even in the kingdom, as it contains within its limits the whole Forest of Dartmoor.<sup>6</sup> The immense extent of this parish, and the distance of some of its hamlets and villages from the church, caused a petition from several of the parishioners to Walter, Bishop of Exeter, dated 13th September, 1260. In this petition they represented the inconvenience of their attending divine service. In consequence of this the bishop ordered, with the consent of the patrons, that the inhabitants of Balbery and Purshill, two villages on the Moor, on account of their distance from Lydford, their mother church, ‘being eight miles in fair, and fifteen in foul weather,’ should resort to Widdecombe church; and for such their privileges

<sup>6</sup> By a late judicial decision, however, a portion of it belongs to the parish of Widdecombe, or Withecombe.

should pay their tithe lambs and three parts of their offerings to the parson of Widdecombe, and all other tithes to their mother church.

“‘Lydford had the privilege of minting in the Anglo-Saxon times.’ The mint continued there but a short period, chiefly through the boisterous reign of Ethelred II., and the coins are consequently rare. There are two or three of them in the late Dr. Hunter’s cabinet.<sup>7</sup>

The Castle is a square building, standing on a heap or mound, probably artificial. The entrance is at the north-west. Before it is a spacious area, with a gentle slope, enclosed by two parallel mounds. At the end of this the ground begins to be very precipitous in its descent; which continues, with the opposite side almost equally steep, till it joins the river near the bridge. Thus Lydford must have been a place of considerable strength, approachable only towards the north-east. This naturally accounts for its high antiquity; as there can be no doubt but that the Britons availed themselves of its local advantages in the earliest ages.

“The stairs and floors of the Castle cannot now be trodden without danger, as the greater part of the boards are wanting. The judge’s chair however remains, and the royal arms over it, in perfect preservation. The infamous Jeffries is reported to have been the last who presided in it. The only thing that seems to have elevated the judge above the rest of the court is a foot-board at the bottom of the chair. There are rails in front about eight feet distant.<sup>8</sup> The

<sup>7</sup> POLWHELE’S *Devon*, vol. i. p. 242.

<sup>8</sup> Since the above description of the Castle was written, it is so gone to ruin that nothing but the bare walls remain.

counsel-table has been removed only within these few years.<sup>9</sup> The ascent to the roof, whence there is a striking and varied view of the neighbouring hills, intersected with deep dells, and bounded on the east by the Dartmoor Tors, and on the west by those of Cornwall, is by steps carried up within the thickness of the wall.

"To the dungeon, which is about sixteen feet by ten, the descent must have been by a ladder, and probably through a trap-door. If this were the case it was completely dark, as there is no window in it, and the room above is lighted only by a single narrow loophole. Within this castle was the prison for offenders against the stannary laws, which, in an act of parliament of the year 1512, is described as 'one of the most banious, contagious, and detestable places in the realm.' That it had not much improved in its repute a century afterwards, appears from Browne's mention of it in one of his poems :

"To lie therein one night 'tis guest  
'Twere better to be stoned and prest,  
Or hang'd—now choose you whether."<sup>1</sup>

"About half a mile distant from Lydford, up the river, is another cascade, called Kitt's Steps, or Kitt's Hole. It is conjectured that the name of *Kitt* originated from the circumstance of a woman called Catharine, or *Kitty*, having lost her life here. She was returning from market on the Okehampton road, which passes very near it, and was riding on a horse with crooks, implements, it is believed, almost peculiar

<sup>9</sup> "We find upon record that the Assizes, at the commencement of this period (temp. Edward I.), were held at Exeter and Lydford alternately."  
—POLWHELE, vol. i. p. 270.

<sup>1</sup> See LYSONS' *Devon*.

to the West of England. The river Lyd was swollen by some heavy rain that had lately fallen on the Moor, where it takes its rise, and both horse and rider were carried away by the impetuosity of the torrent. The woman was unfortunately drowned, prevented probably by the crooks from passing through the rocks; but the horse was found quietly grazing on the bank of the river below.

"I was afraid I should find the scene much injured by the mine; but I have little hesitation in saying that I think it an improvement, at least in point of picturesque effect. Over the river in the foreground is thrown a singular kind of bridge, formed I imagine of part of an old wheel, or whim. Beyond it, at a little distance, is seen the main fall; and considerably above it a branch of the river is conveyed by a wooden aqueduct, supported upon rough poles, with the water dropping in filaments from several parts of it, to an overshot wheel opposite. The accompanying machinery over the shaft, with the flag-staff on the highest summit at a distance, considerably diversify the scene; and as the mine is in its infancy, the heaps of rubbish with which mines are too frequently accompanied, have not yet accumulated so as to offend the eye.

"In order to form a correct idea of this cascade, it will be necessary to take a view of it from the top. The rock appears, by some convulsion of Nature, to be split into two fissures, through only one of which the water flowed till lately, part of it being now carried through the other for the purpose of working the mine.

"From the centre mass, which is about twenty feet high, two or three large pieces of the rock, as may be



seen from the incumbent part, have fallen into the fissure, and have entirely covered it; which no doubt gave origin to the idea, that 'the water runs some way underground,' and when overhung with brushwood, which is generally the case, the deception would be still more complete. I am convinced that this channel could never have been entirely formed by 'the irresistible force of the waters,' as the surface on either side is flat and almost perpendicular. The rock is of a slaty nature, with its strata, unless where it was probably forced out of its direction by the convulsion before alluded to, dipping southward at an angle of about forty-five degrees. The chasm or fissure, through which the river begins to fall, at the depth of about five and twenty feet is about ten feet across. Through it the machinery of the mine below, with the water that is conveyed to it falling over some rough rocks, and forming a kind of cascade, is a pleasing object; whilst through the other chasm are seen at a distance the church and Castle of Lydford. Viewed from below, the water seems in the centre of the chasm to rush from beneath a rock, which no doubt occasioned it to be called Kitt's *Hole*. After three or four obstructions in its course, it leaps over a ledge of rock in a perpendicular fall, but not more than twelve or fourteen feet in height, whilst the water in the basin below is about eleven feet deep."

## LETTER XXXI.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

The Walla Brook ; a Stream celebrated by Browne the Poet—Few Materials for a Life of Browne—Born at Tavistock—Early Life—Goes to Oxford—Influence of Local Scenery on the Mind of a Poet—Browne removes to the Inner Temple—First part of *Britannia's Pastorals*—Selden, Drayton, Glanville, &c., Friends of the Poet—His Poem of the *Shepherd's Pipe*—Second part of *Britannia's Pastorals* published—Appointed Tutor to Robert Dormer, Earl of Carnarvon—Takes his Degree of Master of Arts—Clarendon's Character of the young Earl—William Earl of Pembroke becomes the Friend of the Poet—Browne purchases an Estate—Never Marries ; Dies ; Place of his Burial unknown—His Poem of *Lydford Law*—Judge Jeffries held Sittings at Lydford—The Verses Written whilst Sir Richard Grenville was Governor of the Castle—*Britannia's Pastorals* brought once again into notice in 1772—Merits of Browne as a Poet—His *Masque of Circe*—Episode of the *Loves of the Walla and the Tavy*—This Poem probably suggested by one of Ovid—Extracts from his Works.

*Vicarage, Tavistock, February 5th, 1833.*

THERE is a scene in this neighbourhood, situated about half a mile from Tavistock, that I always visit with the greatest interest, not only for the pleasing objects which are there found combined, but from the poetical associations with which they are connected. The scene I allude to is the *Walla Brook*, a little stream of unpretending character, that, over a rocky bed, comes murmuring down the gentle descent of some sloping grounds, and unites itself

with the Tavy nearly opposite to Rowdon Woods. The Walla was, till very lately, overhung by some vestiges of oak trees so old and decaying, that I never could look at them' without fancying that in the days of Browne the poet he had often reclined under their picturesque branches on the margin of the stream; and there, perhaps, employed his imagination in composing the beautiful episode he introduced in his *Britannia's Pastorals*, called the *Loves of the Walla and the Tavy*. But the old oaks are now gone; somebody has cut them down, most probably for fire-wood, since as timber they could be of no value; and there lies the stream, stripped of its overhanging branches, and looks melancholy, and seems to murmur for the loss of its old neighbours.

I conclude the person, whoever he might be, that committed this act of spoliation had never heard of the poet, else he could never have thus laid low the sylvan patriarchs, so long the tenants of his favourite brook. The scene, too, is spoiled for the pencil, for the venerable appearance of these trees contrasted finely with the playful, the light, and animated character of the river. Before, however, saying anything more about the Walla Brook I shall pause to speak of the poet, who has given to it an interest which no other rivulet, so humble in itself, can claim. Such is the power of poetry; it raises into notice the most neglected things, and often places the wreath of honour on the most lowly head.

There are very few materials for a life of William Browne, and those few were principally collected, most likely from tradition, by Prince, who wrote the *Worthies of Devon* more than a century ago. That Browne died during the Civil Wars is very probable;

and if we consider how much the public mind was occupied with the eventful scenes in which every man then bore a part, we can scarcely wonder that a poet who never lent his pen to the popular feeling passed out of life little noticed; that his memory was not considered sufficiently important to demand any record of his actions; and that his poems, which cherished and taught the peaceful enjoyments of life and the tranquil beauties of the country, should have sunk into neglect. Men of worth, when they have neither power nor opportunity to stir actively in evil times, are generally found in the obscurity of private life, suffering in mind, in fortune, or in both; and when they die less regret is shown for their loss, since, in a time of intense public excitement, the feelings are too much engrossed by the fate of a kingdom to turn with their wonted kindness on the interest of individual benevolence and sympathy. Indeed rebellion and revolution seem to harden the heart, as well as to stir the fiercer passions; how else can we account for the ferocious and almost unnatural crimes accompanying civil war?

That Browne, therefore, who certainly lived in these times, and died long before the Restoration, should have left scarcely any other memorial than his own genius has secured for him in his works, can excite no wonder. The prominent characters of his day were the eminent in crime or in suffering. His name belongs not to the former class, nor have we any authority for saying he was numbered with the latter: it is, therefore, only as a poet that enough of him is known to be judged by posterity with anything like certainty; though it speaks well for his character as a man that many of the eminent and virtuous of

his time were found amongst his associates and friends. Of this more hereafter.

William Browne, a poet contemporary with Shakspeare and Spenser, was born in the town of Tavistock about the year 1590. He was the son of a private gentleman, whose family were of ancient standing in the county of Devon,—Prince says, most likely of the “knightly family of Browne, of Brownes-Illarsh, near Great Torrington.” The uncle of our poet was no doubt a brave man, and in all probability followed the sea, as he was that favourite friend of Sir Francis Drake, called Brute Browne, who was killed by the side of the great Admiral in his own ship off Porto Rico, and whose death Drake so emphatically declared he would not unbend his spirit by lamenting, till he had requited the Spaniards for the deed. The family of Browne, in the male line, became extinct before Prince gathered the few remaining records concerning him; and the estates which had so long been theirs in this county, the worthy chronicler tells us, fell, therefore, ‘among distaffs,’—a mode of phraseology he often uses to express the weaker sex, —though some of the records of Devon would show that in moments of trial, where honour and loyalty were at stake, the distaffs were not in less worthy hands than the swords.

Thomas Browne, the father, finding William much addicted to books, wisely determined to give him a liberal education. He was therefore sent to Oxford, and as his learning is spoken of prior to his removal to the university, it is not unlikely he had received the elements of classical knowledge at the grammar school at Tavistock; and that the first effusions of his infant muse were offered to the Tavy, the river he

celebrates with so much fondness, and on whose banks, he more than once tells us in his poems, he first drew breath. That Browne should have attached himself to pastoral poetry was probably the result of early associations, since most feeling minds retain a lasting regard for their early local impressions, unless they are born in a populous city, where man, more than natural scenery, engages the attention of their opening years. But it was the good fortune of Browne that he was born in the vicinity of a beautiful country; in a town venerable for its history and antiquity, and enriched with the then existing remains of monastic times; near the regions, too, of the vast and fearful in the Forest of Dartmoor, and the beautiful and the wild in the rocks and woods of Morwell. What subjects must these have been to the infant genius of a poet!—where every ramble of his boyhood presented objects such as were passed with indifference by the common eye, but to a mind like his could not fail to afford a full field for observation, reflection, and inquiry. That such was the case, and that he made himself familiarly acquainted with the feathered denizens of his native woods; the flowers and plants that grew on the margin of his beloved stream, and the trees that chequered it with light or shade; we learn from his own poems; his lively descriptions everywhere bear witness to it; and the pastoral character of many of his most excellent productions show that his favourite theme was his best.

Subjects of this nature have so repeatedly been chosen for poetry, that critics sometimes object to their frequent recurrence; but surely this is objection more nice than wise. The study of creation is

inexhaustible ; and, when treated by the feeling mind, never wearies. So impressive are all the works of the Divine hand ; so greatly do the circumstances of nature vary, whilst their general character is the same ; that the eye of a poet, as he looks abroad throughout the changing seasons of the year, in the fruitfulness of summer showers, or in the dreariness of winter days, continually finds some object, however familiar, present itself to him in a new aspect ; there is something before unobserved, or unfelt : hence a fresh interest arises ; a new train of ideas springs up, and he receives those vivid impressions which render his compositions as original as they are pleasing : for all he does is in strict imitation of nature ; like a skilful painter who, feeling every grace of the beautiful object that lies before his view, transfers it with ease upon the canvass, to which he gives an artificial life. Browne, Prince tells us, was removed to Oxford about the beginning of the reign of James I. : he could not then have been more than fifteen or sixteen years old ; and as he made a rapid progress in his studies, his diligence must have kept pace with his opportunities and talents. At Oxford he cultivated his fondness for the muses ; and on removing to the Inner Temple, to pursue the study of the law, he did not neglect that which was in all probability more congenial to his inclinations ; as we find that, at the early age of twenty-three, he produced the first part of his celebrated work, *Britannia's Pastorals*.

In his days reviews, friendly or adverse, were unknown : new works were not handed into the world, like our Devonshire ores, in the mass, stamped by royal authority to secure their reception. But though

reviews were yet unknown, panegyrics, which preceded them, were not; and an author of established name gave a friendly introduction to an aspirant in the world of letters, by addressing him in a copy of verses, or an adulatory sonnet, that was prefixed to his book as a sanction of its merits. Browne's folio was not wanting in these; and it is honourable both to him and to his friends that it should have been so, since it is a clear proof he had not to encounter the heart-depressing feelings of coldness or neglect: his claim to poetical genius was admitted, fostered, and rewarded by that highest of all rewards, the commendation of the wise and the good. Nor can we think other than well of the private character of the poet who, at so early a period, had won the friendship of Selden, of Drayton, of his fellow-townsmen, the great and good Sir John Glanville, of George Withers, and of many others, whose praise alone was fame. Amongst the wits, too, who eulogized Browne was numbered Ben Jonson. In the year following the publication of this folio, encouraged no doubt by the favourable reception he had found with the learned and the tasteful of his day, he produced the *Shepherd's Pipe*, in seven eclogues; a work that by some writers has been considered the model after which Milton wrote his *Lycidas*.

His next publication was the second part of *Britannia's Pastorals*, which established his reputation, and increased the number of his literary and noble friends. With what success he studied the law does not appear, as he is never spoken of by his contemporaries in the character of a lawyer; and from his attention having been so much directed to the poetical works he sent abroad, it is most likely he did



not follow his profession with much zeal, and therefore with little success. Certain it is that neither law nor poetry were very profitable to him in a worldly sense, as his fortune was far from ample; and he finally abandoned the Inner Temple and returned to Exeter College, Oxford, as tutor to Robert Dormer, the young Earl of Carnarvon; a nobleman whose name is enrolled among the most gallant and amiable of the cavaliers who fell in the cause of their injured King.

Whilst engaged in directing the studies of his pupil, Browne took his degree as Master of Arts in a way which did him honour. Nor can we doubt that he performed his duties as tutor in other than the most praiseworthy manner; fostering all those high and generous principles of loyalty and courage in his pupil, which none can better understand than a poetical mind regulated by a love of truth, and of that religion from whose source it springs, and supplies all the branches of knowledge which cultivate or form the moral character as healthful streams do the earth, and bring forth its richest fruits. How long Browne remained as tutor to this young nobleman is not known, nor is there any mention of his having accompanied him on his travels abroad—a thing, however, not impossible.

Clarendon gives a most lively sketch of Lord Carnarvon's character. He speaks of his education having been adorned and finished by travel in the countries of Spain, France, and Italy; and that he had subsequently spent some time in Turkey and the East. On his return home, Clarendon tells us that the young earl followed with considerable zeal the field sports of hawking and hunting, the favourite

exercises of the quality and gentry. But the troubles commenced ; the King's standard was set up in opposition to fanaticism and rebellion, and the bravest and noblest in the land hastened to its support. The Earl of Carnarvon was amongst these ; he had a short but glorious career : in one fatal battle Charles lost friends such as no after time could replace, for Sunderland, Falkland, and Carnarvon fell in Newbury fight ! Well, indeed, might Clarendon exclaim, that "on that day King and kingdom both were lost !"

It was after Browne had quitted the Earl of Carnarvon that he found a gracious patron and friend in William Earl of Pembroke ; a loyalist to whose character the immortal historian of the Great Rebellion pays the most ample tribute. He speaks of Pembroke as a nobleman of such severely just feelings, that he would contract a private friendship with no man unless his public principles were like his own. He describes him also as the generous patron of men of learning and talent. Under such auspices the fortunes of our poet improved ; he became an inmate in the Earl's family, and gained sufficient by whatever employment had been appointed him to purchase an estate. Where it was situated is not known ; but who can doubt it was in his native county of Devon, for which he expresses so strong an attachment in all his works ? It does not appear that he was ever married. Wood says of his person, that he had a little body, but with it a great mind. Prince tells us that it was not known when or where he died ; "for I presume," says that biographer, "he was a different person from him of the same name who died at Ottery St. Mary, in the county of Devon, in the year of our Lord 1645." It is to the honour of Browne's memory that

he was a Royalist. This circumstance in his character is placed beyond all doubt, not merely by his friendship with the Earl of Pembroke, who would have no friends but such as felt as he did, but by Drayton having addressed to him a poem, now printed with his works, on the *Evil Times*, in which he appeals to Browne as a friend who deplores them equally with himself.

The few particulars here related are all that have come down to us respecting William Browne, our Tavistock poet; it now remains to mention successively his works. Besides his *Britannia's Pastorals* and the *Shepherd's Pipe*, he wrote (though it was never published till the year 1772) 'a masque for the gentlemen of the Inner Temple.' On the death of Prince Henry he produced an elegy, which possesses many conceits but no pathos. He wrote also some minor pieces; amongst them a humorous poem, in which he alludes to the old saying of *Lydford Law*. This he composed after a visit to Lydford Castle. An imperfect copy of this was first printed in Prince's *Worthies of Devon*. Respecting this poem, Mr. Chapple, the editor of Risdon, says, "I happen to be furnished with a true copy of the original very manuscript, by the transcriber, late Mr. Hals', of Cornwall, own hand; wherein are *three whole stanzas* which that of Mr. Prince has not. Mr. Hals acquaints us also with the occasion of its having first been written. 'Mr. William Browne,' says he, 'A.D. 1644, coming to Lydford Castle to visit his friend, Lieut. Col. James Hals (son of Sir Nicholas Hals, late of Fentongollan, Cornwall, Kt.), then and there a prisoner of war of the Parliament party, under the custody of Sir Richard Grenville, Kt., King Charles the First's

General in the West ; and the said Mr. Browne (and his companions) having had a full view of this town and Castle of Lydford, soon after his return to Tavistock, sent Mr. Hals, under his own MS. those now (viz., by Mr. Prince) printed verses, with the MS. additions of verses 9, 10, 11, of which Mr. Prince absolutely wanted knowledge.”

I have been induced to give the above long and quaint extract, because it serves to prove that the old saying of *Lydford Law*, to express an arbitrary procedure in judgment, was known in Browne’s days ; and could not therefore, as is commonly said, have had its origin at the time Judge Jeffries held his sittings in the courts of Lydford Castle, for Browne’s poem absolutely begins with the following allusion :—

“ I oft have heard of *Lydford Law*,  
How in the morn they hang and draw,  
And sit in judgment after ;  
At first I wondered at it much,  
But since I find the matter such  
As it deserves no laughter.”

Convinced by reading this that Judge Jeffries could have had nothing to do with our old saying, I determined to try if I could not trace out in the history of this part of the West some circumstance that was at least likely to give rise to it ; and I think I have succeeded. However, you shall judge if I am right or wrong in my conjectures.

Browne, be it borne in mind, wrote these verses after his visit to his friend Col. Hals, then *Sir Richard Grenville’s prisoner of war*, in Lydford Castle ; and of Sir Richard’s conduct whilst governor of that castle we have a very formidable picture drawn by the pen of Clarendon. The commissioners of Devon

applied to the prince, afterwards Charles II., petitioning that he would regulate "the exorbitant power of Sir Richard Grenville, who raised what money he pleased, and committed what persons he pleased." The commissioners for Cornwall likewise "presented a very sharp complaint against him, for the strange acts of tyranny exercised by him." "That he had," amongst other arbitrary deeds, "committed very many honest substantial men, and all the constables of the east part of the county, to *Lydford prison*" (it was in the Castle) "in Devonshire, for no offence, but to compel them to ransom themselves for money." In another instance he hanged "one Brabant, an attorney-at-law" (who was employed by Grenville's wife in conducting a suit against her husband for ill treatment), "and *afterwards*, before the council, said he did it because the man was a spy." He was also charged with a vexatious practice of calling out the posse comitatus on a sudden, merely to avail himself of the fine and imprisonment of defaulters. One of the constables he hanged up *without trial*; and then stated he had executed the man for negligence in his duty. Putting together these acts, I think we need look no farther than the time of Sir Richard Grenville's government in Lydford Castle, to find a very likely origin for the saying of Lydford Law referred to in the poem of Browne. Thus, then, Judge Jeffries—whose ghost, according to a tradition of this place, still visits the old court-room at Lydford, in the shape of a black pig—stands acquitted on this charge; having assuredly quite enough to answer for, without any additional matter.

You mentioned to me in a letter, and Mr. Bray had also drawn my attention to the same thing, that some

years since Sir Egerton Brydges had printed at the Priory Press and published, a volume of Browne's original poems that had never before been given to the world. This volume is now, I believe, very scarce ; I have never had the good fortune to see one, nor can I obtain a copy of it. It was spoken of by some writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* a few years ago as containing many poems, principally lyric, equal, if not superior, to *Britannia's Pastorals*.

Mr. Beloe, the author of the *Anecdotes of Literature*, possessed a curious copy, in manuscript, of a collection of complimentary poems addressed to William Browne, by his brethren of Exeter College, Oxford. These, in addition to being curious as compositions of that day, serve to show the high degree of estimation and regard in which the poet was held by his most intimate associates—an undoubted evidence of his worth. Amongst the friends who so eulogised him, we find Edward Hall, who appears to have been one of the sons of the learned bishop of that name. His verses are far beyond the general run of complimentary poems ; they possess some elegance, and a happy turn of thought and expression, that evince the writer himself to have been no indifferent poet. Beloe's collection was, excepting that of Sir E. Brydges, I believe, the last publication of any original matter connected with Browne.

With a true poet, the world of Nature will ever be his chief delight : with him nothing is viewed in vain ; and all he acquires by study and observation he devotes to the highest purposes. Whatever is glorious in the heavens, he sees with reference to God ; and his contemplations become essentially religious : these inspire him with all noble thoughts ; a generous

contempt for riches; for all selfish ends are inconsistent with the fervour of his enthusiasm, and the solemn aspirations of his mind. His genius soars on a seraph's wing; and whatever is grand, whatever is beautiful, are to him as familiar friends. Solitude with him is 'sweet society;' and the view of Nature in her serenest hour conveys to him lessons of virtue and of peace. Every image he traces, every idea that presents itself to his imagination, becomes as a treasure, whence he selects those varied illustrations which add force to moral truth, and clothe religion in a robe of purity and grace. The theatre of rising hills, the fountain of 'many waters,' 'the gush' of song as the light of day plays on mountain, path, and wood, the bursting vegetation, and every opening bud bathed in dew, to him are objects of holy joy; and he learns from them that wisdom which delivers the soul from the thralldom of worldly cares, and fears, and passions; whilst his affections become fixed on him in whom there is neither change nor shadow of turning. The God of all creation is his father; heaven is his home, and eternity the measure of his hopes.

Such is a true poet; and such were the sacred poets of Jerusalem, ere they were led away captive to sing "the Lord's song in a strange land." Even in these latter times we have had some gifted with this sacred spirit of poesy, whose lamps have burnt bright before the altar. But we have also had others who have made the music of harmonious verse a snare to the ear, and a deeper snare to the soul, in the pollutions they have conveyed to it by beguiling the senses. But their verses deserve not the honoured name of poetry, since they do not contain its es-

sence—truth; the form may be there, yet the spirit is wanting; for the muse will not rest on polluted ground.

It is not my intention to attempt any minute criticism of the works of William Browne; a far more competent hand than mine is required for the task. The writings of our poet, though soon after his death they fell into neglect, were once again brought into notice by Mr. Davies, the publisher, in 1772. Posterity has awarded to Browne those honours, which are sometimes, by envy combining with untoward circumstances, denied to the living, but seldom to the dead when they are truly deserved. Some few remarks I shall alone venture to offer, since an acquaintance with the local scenes from which he drew many of his lively pictures enables an admirer of his poetry more fully to appreciate the merit of his descriptions, and the delicacy of his colouring in its most varied shades. However much Browne may have been praised for the fertility of his invention, and the strength of his numbers, it seems to me that his chief excellence lies in the picturesque manner in which he imitated Nature. His birds, his flowers, and his rural scenery have all the vivid fidelity of truth. Indeed, he tells us himself at the beginning of his first book that he intended to copy after Nature, as she was seen surrounding the place of his birth:

“My muse for lofty pitches shall not rome,  
But homely pipen of my native home.”

With rural scenery he had also studied rural character, and whenever he touches on the feelings that are chiefly called into play in a country life, it is evident he had seen and participated in those feel-



ings he describes. In the higher efforts of imagination he is far beneath Spenser, whose works he is considered to have studied with the diligence of a pupil in his school. This may be traced in his *Shepherd's Pipe*, which, though it possesses many beautiful passages, is not to be compared with the *Shepherd's Calendar* of his master. There is nothing in it that approaches in excellence Spenser's inimitable fable of the bramble and the oak. Nor did Browne equal Drayton in those wild flights of fancy that make many poems of the latter (the *Nymphidia* in particular) so attractive, that we grow familiar with the fairy ground over which he guides our willing feet. It has been said that Browne's *Masque of Circe*, written for the gentlemen of the Inner Temple, gave Milton the hint from which he borrowed his *Masque of Comus*; but there seems little probability such was the case. The song of the syren in the *Circe* has been justly celebrated, and the poem possesses many striking passages; but as a whole it is greatly inferior to *Comus* in graceful sentiment and elegant diction.

Browne's great fault, more or less seen in all his poems, was that he never knew where to stop; so that he often weakens an image, or renders tedious a description, by running it out to an unconscionable length. This, though a fault, is one often found where there is much vivacity of imagination, and copiousness of expression: the plants of a barren soil have no luxuriance that requires pruning to give greater strength to those branches that it would be desirable to cultivate with the utmost care. However Browne, as a poet, might excel in rural imagery, he was able to soar in the higher regions of his art, though he seldom ventured within their confines:

some few passages of this description in his *Britannia's Pastorals* are such as our greatest epic poets would not have disowned, as of a spirit kindred with their own. His verse is peculiarly harmonious, and flows on with a smoothness that is seldom broken by any harsh turn or mean image and word ; though these latter faults are not such as he is wholly free from ; indeed they sometimes intrude in the midst of an elevated description, or noble figure, in his subject. Thus we find in the first song of the second book, he injures the solemnity with which he is conducting the approach of 'all drowsie night,' in her car of jet from her secret caverns, by making the steeds of 'iron grey' with which she is drawn send 'moist drops' upon the earth, which they '*mainly sweat*.' Here the expression is coarse, and the image disagreeable : it offends the reader in the midst of a very striking picture. We would also wish (a few lines farther on) that the poet in describing the rivulets had omitted the '*conduit-pipes*,' and had rather called those rivulets by their simple and proper name, in their progress from the 'many a crystall spring.'

It is, however, but fair to surmise that these '*conduit-pipes*' were probably suggested to him by the upper and lower conduit in the main street of his native town ; for though these might not be compared to the fountains of Rome, yet in his day, and even till within a few years past, they were objects of peculiar attraction, and places of general resort with all the old and young women and children in the neighbourhood. There they gathered to fill their water-buckets ; to chat or wash their clothes at these fountains. The groups of girls thus assembled and employed might, in some degree, remind one of Nausicaa and her

damsels, who, by the command of Pallas, washed the bridal robes of state in that limpid fountain where the virgins of Phæacia were wont to purify their vestments and pursue their sports, as their mantles lay outspread and drying on the grass around them. This is probably rather too fine a simile for the old Tavistock conduit and the pretty Devonians assembled around it washing their clothes ; and as these ancient conduits no longer exist, I have never seen the picturesque groups they once afforded, though I am assured by Mr. Bray they were such as would have supplied the most admirable subjects for the pencil of an artist like Prout, whose fondness for washing figures is well known to the admirers of his works.

Of all Browne's poems, that which is most likely to interest an inhabitant of Tavistock is the episode he introduces in the second book of *Britannia's Pastorals*, the *Loves of the Walla and the Tavy*. I may be wrong in the conjecture, but I cannot help fancying the idea of this episode was suggested to him by Ovid's Egeria transformed into a fountain. Walla, by her own prayer, like Egeria, is changed into a stream, and runs to meet her beloved Tavy. This episode is replete with the most beautiful imagery, and many of the scenes it describes with so much truth and feeling will be recognized by a lover of 'sweet Ina's coombe,' and 'Walla's silver stream.' Ere quitting the subject of Browne's works, I cannot help selecting a few of the many beautiful passages with which they abound, as the best comment upon the merit of our poet with which I can conclude this long letter. How lively is the following description !

“Looke as a lover with a lingering kisse,  
About to part with the best halfe that’s his,  
Faine would he stay but that he fears to doe it,  
And curseth time for so fast hast’ning to it ;  
Now takes his leave, and yet begins anew  
To make lesse vows than are esteemed true,  
Then sayes he must be gone, and then doth finde  
Something he should have spoke that’s out of minde,  
And whilst he stands to looke for’t in her eyes,  
Their sad sweet glance so tyes his faculties,  
To think from what he parts, that he is now  
As farre from leaving her, or knowing how  
As when he came ; begins his former straine,  
To kisse, to vow, and take his leave againe,  
Then turns, comes backe, sighes, parts, and yet doth go  
Apt to retire, and loth to leave her soe.”

How animated is this picture of boys hunting the  
‘squirrel!’

“Then as a nimble squirrel from the wood,  
Ranging the hedges for his filberd-food,  
Sits partly on a bough his browne nuts cracking,  
And from the shell the sweet white kernel taking,  
Till (with their crookes and bags) a sort of boyes  
(To share with him) come with so great a noyse  
That he is forc’d to leave a nut nigh broke,  
And for his life leape to a neighbour oake ;  
Thence to a beech, thence to a row of ashes,  
Whilst through the quagmires and red water plashes  
The boyes run dabbling through thicke and thin.  
One tears his hose, another breakes his shin ;  
This, torn and tatter’d, hath with much adoe  
Got by the bryers, and that hath lost his shoe :  
This drops his band ; that headlong falls for haste ;  
Another cryes behind for being last :  
With stickes and stones, and many a sounding halloo,  
The little foole, with no small sport, they follow ;  
Whilst he, from tree to tree, from spray to spray,  
Gets to the wood and hides him in his dray ;  
Such shift made riot ere he could get up,  
And so, from bough to bough, he wonne the toppe ;

Though hind'rances, from ever coming there,  
Were often thrust upon him by despaire."

A stag in chase is thus introduced with great beauty :—

" More he had spoke, but that a bugle shrill  
Ran through the valley from the higher hill ;  
And as they turn'd them towards the hart'ning sound,  
A gallant stag, as if he scorn'd the ground,  
Came running with the winde, and bore his head  
As he had been the king of forests bred !  
Not swifter comes the messenger of heaven,  
Nor winged vessel with a full gale driven,  
Nor the swift swallow flying neere the ground."

The industry of the house-marten, a common bird here, is thus prettily described :—

" So soone as can a marten from our towne  
Fly to the river underneath the downe,  
And backe returne with mortar in her bill  
Some little cranny in her nest to fill."

The following is a most lively description of a concert of birds :—

" Two nights thus past : the lily-handed Morne  
Saw Phœbus stealing dewe from Ceres' corne.  
The mounting larke (daie's herauld) got on wing,  
Bidding each bird choose out his bow and sing.  
The lofty treble sung the little wren ;  
Robin the meane, that best of all loves men ;  
The nightingale the tenor, and the thrush  
The counter-tenor sweetly in a bush :  
And that the music might be full in parts,  
Birds from the groves flew with right willing hearts :  
But (as it seemed) they thought (as do the swaines,  
Which tune their pipes on sack'd Hibernia's plaines)  
There should some droaning part be, therefore will'd  
Some bird to flie into a neighbouring field,

In embassie unto the king of bees,  
 To aide his partners on the flowers and trees,  
 Who condescending gladly flew along  
 To beare the base to his well-tuned song.  
 The crow was willing they should be beholden  
 For his deep voice, but being hoarse with scolding,  
 He thus lends aide : upon an oake doth climbe,  
 And, nodding with his head, so keepeth time."

The Devonshire legend, that fairies and pixies steal honey from the hives of bees, is thus noticed by Browne :—

"For as I oft have heard the wood-nimphs say,  
 The dancing fairies when they left to play,  
 Then backe did pull them, and in holes of trees  
 Stole the sweet honey from the painfull bees,  
 Which in the flower to put they oft were seene,  
 And for a banquet brought it to their queene."

Many an inhabitant of Tavistock will recognise the following scenes :—

"A little grove is seated on the marge  
 Of Tavy's streame, not over thicke nor large,  
 Where every morn a quire of Silvans sung,  
 And leaves to chatt'ring windes serv'd as a tongue,  
 By whom the water runs in many a ring,  
 As if it fain would stay to heare them sing,  
 And on the top a thousand young birds flye  
 To be instructed in their harmony.  
 Neere to the end of this all-joyous grove  
 A dainty circled plot seem'd as it strove  
 To keepe all bryers and bushes from invading  
 Her pleasing compasse by their needlesse shading,  
 Since it was not so large but that the store  
 Of trees around could shade her best and more.  
 In midst thereof a little swelling hill,  
 Gently disburthen'd of a christall rill,  
 Which from the green side of the flowry bancke  
 Eat downe a channell—there the wood-nimphs drank."

Here are the lines alluding to Ina's Coombe, now more commonly called Inscoombe, situated about a mile and a half from Tavistock :—

“ There lyes a vale extended to the north  
 Of Tavy's streame, which prodigall, sends forth  
 In autumnne more rare fruits than have been spent  
 In any greater plot of fruitful Kent.  
 Two high brow'd rocks on eyther side begin,  
 As with an arch to close the valley in.  
 Upon their rugged fronts short writen oakes  
 Untouch'd of any feller's banefull stroakes,  
 The ivy, twisting round their barks, hath fed  
 Past time wylde goates which no man followed  
 Low in the valley some small herds of deere,  
 For head and footmanship withouten peer,  
 Fed undisturbed ; the swains that thereby thrived,  
 By the tradition from their sires derived,  
 Call'd it sweet *Ina's-coombe* : but whether she  
 Were of the earth or greater progeny  
 Judge by her deeds ; once this is truely knowne,  
 She many a time hath on a bugle blowne,  
 And through the dale pursu'd the jolly chase,  
 As she had bid the winged windes abase.”

Another scene in our neighbourhood is thus beautifully described :—

“ Betweene two hills, the highest Phoebus sees  
 Gallantly crown'd with large skie-kissing trees,  
 Under whose shade the humble valleys lay  
 And wilde-bores from their dens their gambles play,<sup>1</sup>  
 There lay a gravel'd walke oregrowne with greene,  
 Where neither tract of man nor beast was seene ;  
 And as the plow-man when the land he tills,  
 Throwes up the fruitfull earth in ridged hils,  
 Betweene whose chevron form he leaves a balke ;  
 So 'twixt those hils had nature fram'd this walke,

<sup>1</sup> The '*wilde-bores*' as well as the '*nightingales*' of Browne, in *Devonshire*, I apprehend must have been poetical licenses.

Not over darke, nor light, in angles bending,  
 And like the gliding of a snake descending :  
 All husht and silent as the mid of night :  
 No chatt'ring pie, nor crow appear'd in sight ;  
 But further in I heard the turtle-dove  
 Singing sad dirges on her lifeless love ;  
 Birds that compassion from the rocks could bring  
 Had only license in that place to sing :  
 Whose doleful notes the melancholy cat  
 Close in a hollow tree sat wond'ring at.  
 And trees that on the hill side comely grew,  
 When any little blast of Æol blew  
 Did nod their curled heads, as they would be  
 The judges to approve their melody."

The poet thus describes himself, when about to relate his tale of 'Walla, Tavy's fairest love :'

Among the rest a shepheard (though but young,  
 Yet hart'ned to his pipe) with all the skill  
 His few yeeres could, began to fit his quill,  
 By Tavi's speedy streame he fed his flocke,  
 Where when he sate to sport him on a rocke,  
 The water nymphs would often come unto him,  
 And for a dance with many gay gifts woo him.  
 Now posies of this flowre, and then of that ;  
 Now with fine shels, then with a rushy hat,  
 With corall or red stones brought from the deepe  
 To make him bracelets, or to marke his sheepe.  
 Willie he hight. Who by the ocean's queene  
 More cheer'd to sing than such young lads had beene,  
 Tooke his best-framed pipe and thus gan move  
 His voice of Walla, Tavy's fairest love."

The progress of the whole episode reminds the reader of Ovid. After the nymph Walla is transformed into a stream, the poem thus concludes :—

"To Tavy's christall streame her waters goe  
 As if some secret power ordayned so ;  
 And as a maide she loved him, so a brooke  
 To his imbracements onely her betooke.



On Walla's brooke her sisters now bewayle  
For whom the rocks spend tears when others fail,  
And all the woods ring with their piteous moanes :  
Which Tavy hearing, as he chid the stones,  
That stopt his speedy course, raising his head  
Inquired the cause, and thus was answered :  
'Walla is now no more. Nor from the hill  
Will she more pluck for thee the daffadill,  
Nor make sweet anadems, to gird thy brow :  
Yet in the grove she runs, a river now.  
Looke as the feeling plant, which learned swaines  
Relate to grow on the East Indian plaines,  
Shrinkes up his dainty leaves, if any sand  
You throw thereon, or touch it with your hand :  
So with the chance the heavy wood-nymphs told,  
The river, inly touched, began to fold  
His arms across, and, while the torrent raves,  
Shrunke his grave head beneath his silver waves.  
Since when he never on his bankes appeares  
But as one franticke : when the clouds spend teares,  
He thinks they of his woes compassion take,  
(And not a spring but weeps for Walla's sake ;)  
And then he often (to bemoane her lacke)  
Like to a mourner goes, his waters blacke,  
And every brooke attending in his way,  
For that time meets him in the like array."

## LETTER XXXII.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

Period of the Great Rebellion—Commencement of the Reign of Charles I.—Prosperous state of England—The amiable Character of the King—Discontents—Factions—The Marquis of Hertford; Sir Ralph Hopton, &c., sent into the West—Stratton Hill—State of Devon at this Period—Tavistock a disaffected Place—Pym its Member—Lewknor the Vicar—Sir Bevil Grenville, his Gallantry and Spirit—Sir Nicholas Slanning, Governor of Pendennis Castle—Muster-roll of Slanning—Earl of Stamford retires to Tavistock—The Royalists march to meet him—Stamford leaves the Town—The Royalists in Distress—Terms of Treaty at Tavistock—Victory of Stratton—Sir Bevil Grenville killed—Sir Nicholas Slanning killed—Prince Charles, afterwards Charles II., comes to Tavistock, 1645—Receives Letters from the King—The Prince and his Councillors deliberate—The Prince resolves to march to Totnes—The Retreat from Tavistock to Launceston left to the conduct of Sir Richard Grenville—In 1644 the House at Fitzford held out against the Rebels—Taken by Lord Essex—Character of Lady Howard—Her numerous Marriages—Her Beauty, Talents, and Wealth—Buckingham procures her for the Wife of Sir Richard Grenville—His ill-treatment of his Wife—Suit in Chancery concerning her Property—Disastrous Consequences to the Husband—Walreddon another Mansion and Domain of Lady Howard—Sir Richard escapes his long Imprisonment—Goes beyond Sea—Sir Richard returns—Becomes a Royalist; his Wife takes part with the Republicans—He settles in her House near Tavistock—Time of Lady Howard's Death uncertain—Legend of Lady Howard and the Goblin Hound—Tradition respecting Charles II.'s Flight to Tavistock—Old Buildings considered the Scene of Charles's concealment, said to have originally belonged to Orgar, Earl of Devon—Traditionary Tale of the courage of a Girl when Tavistock was in the Hands of the Rebels—Painted Glass and Tombs destroyed—A curious Poem written by a Schoolmaster, called *Tavistock's Encomium*.

*Vicarage, Tavistock, April 13th, 1833.*

THE next remarkable period of which I have to speak in the history of our town is that of the Great Rebellion; when it will be found this place was, more than once, a busy scene of action, of negotiation, of contest, and of all those varied movements of hope and fear that influenced the adherents of either party during so perilous a time.

That in the commencement of the reign of Charles I. abuses existed, that the prerogative of the Crown was not sufficiently defined, and that in some instances an arbitrary power was exercised by the King, are truths not denied even by his warmest advocates. But what were these grievances in comparison with the many blessings then enjoyed by the country at large? And is it not cruel and most unjust to condemn Charles for some arbitrary deeds, without taking into consideration the acts of his predecessors, and the almost more than mortal rule that was then held sacred and unalienable in princes? The acts of Henry VIII., of Mary, of Elizabeth, and even of James I., the way in which they commanded parliaments and tutored councils, were too often in the highest degree an exercise of the most arbitrary will; and could it be expected that Charles, educated in a court where the divine right of kings was never disputed—where from his cradle he was taught that absolute obedience was due to the Crown—should at once forget the lessons and examples held up to him for years? Yet, as an attentive examination into all his acts will prove, he was far less arbitrary than his predecessors. Clarendon declares that he was doubt-

ful of his own judgment, where that judgment was often the soundest and the best ; and too much led, from this very want of confidence in himself, by the opinions of those around him. He had not, indeed, at all times about him a Falkland and a Hyde for his bosom counsellors and friends.

Yet if we consider the state of England, as the great historian of those days has depicted it, at the commencement of Charles's reign, we shall wonder by what infatuation, if the chastising hand of God was not in it, a country could be led on to the scenes of outrage then committed, and to the murder of so amiable and virtuous a prince! The kingdom was at peace, and commerce so flourished, that Perinchief tells us, even in return for the Spanish gold, then coined at an English mint, the merchants exported their own goods, mostly of native commodities. Husbandry was thriving, the land increasing in value and cultivation. Over the wide seas the English name and character were respected. The laws were administered with care ; and even the courts against which the greatest objections were raised seldom punished other than notorious offenders. The arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture were cherished and encouraged by a King of the most refined taste ; they were indeed rising to such a degree of perfection as, had his life and throne been spared, would have made this kingdom rival in her schools those of foreign countries in their proudest days. Above all, the Church was graced by men of such eminence, piety, and learning, that the works of many of the prelates and divines of that day will exist as long as the language in which they are written endures. Yet these blessings were strangely overlooked by a thankless

and indulged people ; they thought most of what they still wanted, and undervalued what they had ; for nothing could satisfy the wilful and discontented. To give happiness to such was useless. As the calmest and most crystalline spring, if it pours forth its waters into the sea, will become distasteful and turbulent amidst angry waves ; even so God's choicest blessings poured on a thankless people lose all there is in them of blessing, and presently change their nature ; for every thing must be ill, where there is no disposition to think it well. The reign of Charles was, indeed, disastrous ; that long train of prosperity had corrupted the nation, even as prosperity sometimes corrupts individuals in their fortunes. In his day there was the insolence of wealth, and a growing self-opinion founded on error, the certain forerunner of a sullen impatience of authority : a love of change came with these opinions ; and the vulgar, who are ever eager after novelty, and think the newest thing the wisest and the best, were fed with the hopes of a wild and fanatical liberty.

Thus did the designing, the violent, and the disaffected, in Charles's days, eagerly unite with all who would but help the work of mischief. The hopes of the spoliation of the Church were a sufficient spur to raise the outcry against bishops ; and the mob, who love action when pillage is likely to follow, were ready enough to assemble on the least sign from their leaders. No one was thought so inconsiderable but that his services were welcomed at such a time ; for though to support the honour of a kingdom, to defend its institutions and preserve its sanity, requires courage, constancy, and sense, the meanest and vilest of their kind are fully competent for the work of destruction,

whilst men who are the most cowardly in situations where their actions are seen singly, and so fall within cognizance of the laws, become bold and even brutal in a rabble, where, however great the injury may be that is effected, the blame is general more than particular.

Had the redress of real grievances been the only motive that stirred on the patriots, as they were called, of Charles's time, they would soon have been satisfied, for grievances were complained of and redressed; but every concession made from fear, produced a yet higher, less reasonable, and more insulting demand. And when terms were proposed to the King, as in the negotiations at Carisbrook, during his captivity, his enemies first proposed something within the possibility of his consent; but no sooner did they find that he was likely to grant it, than something else was added, repugnant to his feelings and his conscience, to which they knew he could not consent; and thence they took occasion to represent him as faithless, and not to be relied on in any terms proposed! Thus was his honour defamed, and that reverence for his person which his virtues, as well as his station, so justly entitled him to command, was no longer entertained for him: it was but one of those sure modes to overturn the throne, by rendering him who fills it an object of contempt and distrust in the minds of men.

Such was the end of that general system of change and reformation which produced the Civil Wars in the times of Charles I.; a fearful example that it is dangerous to commence any system of reformation contrary to the known laws and ordinances of God—contrary to the wisdom and practice of ages. When

the zealots and patriots of Charles's days stepped beyond the boundary of duty, then was it the pride of the heart, and not the love of freedom, which became the motive and the measure of their actions. They advocated the liberty of the subject, and became slaves to the tyranny of an armed force. Their House of Commons rose up against law, and submitted to those who made their own will a law. They aided in the murder of a king, and were driven from their seats by a dictator. They commenced their career by tampering with things that should have been held inviolate: they would taste the sweets of liberty—a wild liberty of their own choosing—but like the honey of Jonathan, in those scriptures they affected to follow to the letter, too many found death in the flavour, for the poison remained when the sweetness was no more found.

Good, it is true, at length arose out of evil; but that was God's doing, not theirs. They made the havoc of the tempest: he alone sent the calm which succeeded it, in the restoration of the Throne and the Church.

At the time that Charles, finding it necessary to strengthen his power in the several parts of England where he could hope to make a stand against the Parliament, sent into the West the Marquis of Hertford, with many nobles devotedly attached to his cause; he sent there likewise Sir Ralph Hopton, Sir John Berkeley, and Sir Hugh Pollard; the latter gentleman being a native of Devon, and possessing considerable influence amongst all classes in the county. Many others of the best families in the shire, the most respected, and having large estates, emulously followed their example, and spared neither

their property nor their lives in the service of the King. Various were the fortunes experienced by these brave men. They were sometimes raised to the highest hopes of ultimate success, as in the battle of Stratton Heights, and at others, as in the yielding of Exeter and Plymouth, they were reduced to the most melancholy prospects of the future. Yet, unsubdued in spirit, many were the plans, some recorded in history, others but the theme of tradition, concerted, even in the most hopeless extremities, to raise the men of the West in the cause of the King. So sharp were the contests in this county, that there is scarcely an old house belonging to a family of any consequence during the period of the Rebellion, but underwent a regular siege, was taken and retaken—like Ford House, and Sydenham, and Great Fulford—battered and injured, with all the circumstances attending wars so bitter in their nature, where one townsman, or one friend, frequently found himself placed in opposition to another, without the kindly feelings of private intercourse having been previously broken.

Clarendon remarks that in Devon, “though there was a wonderful and superstitious reverence towards the name of a Parliament, and a prejudice to the power of the Court, yet was there a full submission and love of the established government of Church and State, especially to that part of the Church as concerned the liturgy, or book of common prayer, which was a most general object of veneration with the people.” So much, indeed, did this love of the liturgy prevail, that during those times when the ascendancy of the Parliament was greatest in the West, service was in many of the family mansions



regularly observed by some secreted minister of the Church, who performed it often at the hazard of his liberty and his life. Walker, in his very curious book on the sequestered clergy, furnishes so many well-authenticated histories of the persecution and zeal of these good and learned men in our county, that a very interesting little volume on the subject might be collected from him and Prince.

It was about the time that Sir Ralph Hopton arrived at Launceston in Cornwall, when an order of the sessions was granted to the high sheriff, a gentleman loyal to the King, to raise the posse comitatus for the purpose of dispersing the unlawful assembly of committee men (Sir Alexander Carew and Sir Richard Buller being at their head) at Launceston, under whose authority Sir George Chudleigh, a gentleman of talents, courage, and fortune, was most actively employed at Tavistock, with five or six troops of horse, to raise men on the Parliament side. Sir George intended to advance farther westward, but he paused on learning news of the hostile preparations being made by Sir Ralph Hopton, previous to the battle of Stratton Heights; Chudleigh, therefore, thought it prudent not to stir farther than necessary from his present quarters, and he merely drew off a part of his force to Lifton.

Tavistock, I fear, notwithstanding the brave manner in which the old house at Fitzford held out for the King, was a very disaffected place. Nor can we wonder at this, when we recollect that it was under the immediate influence of the Earl of Bedford, who had taken part with the rebel Parliament; that the notorious and artful Pym was its member, and that Strode and his crew of evil spirits, making their

haunt at Newnham, only a few miles from the town of Plymouth, kept up a constant intercourse with this neighbourhood, even whilst they were engaged in their duties elsewhere. There was likewise in Tavistock a certain Mr. Thomas Lewknor, then vicar of the town, and though of him I have been able to learn no particulars, yet as he was noted by the Parliament committee in their report as 'a preaching minister,' and suffered to remain quiet in his cure, we may rest satisfied that he was more a prudent than a zealous servant of the Church, and did not harangue his flock on the sin of rebellion to the King. Lewknor enjoyed, according to the same report, a very good living in proportion to the times, since it is there set down at two hundred and forty pounds per annum, and a glebe yearly valued at seven pounds; the whole making a large income in those days for a country clergyman, though in so populous a town.<sup>1</sup>

After raising the posse comitatus of the West for the King, the loyal gentlemen next determined on raising voluntary regiments of foot among themselves, their followers, tenantry, and friends. Sir Bevil Grenville, that truly chivalrous leader in generosity, gallantry, and courage; and the noble and accomplished Sir Nicholas Slanning (son of the Slanning who was killed in the duel by Sir John Fitz) exerted themselves resolutely and unremittingly in the royal cause. Sir Nicholas was at this time governor of Pendennis Castle, and a member of the House of Commons.<sup>2</sup> So likewise were John Arundel

<sup>1</sup> Eleven pounds per annum was, in the days of Henry VIII., the pension charged for the vicar, on the Russell family, by the original grant of the Abbey lands.

<sup>2</sup> The muster-roll of Sir Nicholas Slanning is still in existence. My brother copied it, and inserted it, in his notices of Tavistock Abbey,

and Trevanion, both gentlemen of the greatest worth. These also undertook to raise a troop of horse volunteers for the King. Tremayne, Trelawny, Edgcumbe, and many other men of fortune and merit, hastened to show their zeal in the same cause at this eventful time; and Sir Richard Grenville (younger brother of Sir Bevil) was soon after sent into the West bearing the King's commission, which, notwithstanding some good services he rendered, was by him grievously disgraced and abused.

Not long after the gentlemen of the West had thus associated themselves in support of the royal standard in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. The following are curious items:—"Stannary of Tavistock—A perfect muster-roll, containing the several hundreds, parishes, and hamlets, together with the officers and souldiers within the said stannary. Officers, Sir Nicholas Slanning, Lieutenant-Colonel; Joseph Drake, Esq., Captain-Lieutenant; John Jacob, Gent., Ensign." Names of four sergeants and eight corporals; then follow the names of the men from the different hundreds, making in all a force of 156, of which about two-thirds bear muskets, and the rest pikes. "Seen and confirmed by us under our hands and seales—(the first name effaced) Nicholas Slanning, Edw. Yarde, Joseph Drake."—At the back of the roll are the following notes respecting the arms of the company. They are very curious.

"Horse defensive armes, are a backe, brest, and pot, pistol prooffe; offensive, a sword and case of pistells, ther barrel not under 14 inches in length; horse furniture, a great saddle or pad with burrs and straps to affix the holster."

"Footman's armes: musquett barrell not under three foot; the gage of the bore for twelve bullets (new) but y<sup>e</sup> old way fourteen to y<sup>e</sup> pound; a collar of bandaliers; with a sworde."

"Pykeman's armes: a pyke of ashe not under 16 foote, head and foote included, with a backe, brest, head-piece, and sworde, y<sup>e</sup> old pyke fifteen (feet); musquetier, halfe pound poudder, and 3 yardes of matche, half a pound of bullets."

"Horse, a q<sup>r</sup> a pound poudder and soe of bullets; 5s. for every day's omission" (of attendance). Clarendon tells us all the ammunition was supplied by Sir Nicholas Slanning from the store at Pendennis Castle; and that whilst at Tavistock he was distressed by the small supply that remained. The above scanty list shows the correctness of the historian.

dard, Sir Ralph Hopton obtained a victory (1641) over the Parliament forces at Bradock Down, near Liskeard, in Cornwall, where Ruthen had led the rebels on. In this engagement the Royalists were singularly fortunate ; since, without the loss of one gentleman of any note, and very few men, they made twelve hundred of the enemy prisoners, seized their colours, ammuniton, cannon, and stores, and set Ruthen flying, who speedily took shelter in Saltash, with a view to fortifying it against further assaults from his pursuers. The Earl of Stamford, hearing of his ill success, retired in great disorder into Tavistock, where he hoped to act as a check on the growing successes of the Royalist party.

The Royalists no sooner heard of Stamford having taken his station in our town, than they determined to rout him out, and secure the place for the King. Sir Bevil Grenville, Sir Nicholas Slanning, Colonel Trevanion, and others, advanced, therefore, with all their forces, towards Tavistock. But the Earl not liking their visit, and probably thinking so many guests were more than he could entertain in a manner that would be satisfactory to the Parliament, fled before their arrival, and took refuge in Plymouth. The Royalists, disappointed in their expected encounter with Stamford, dispersed their companies in various quarters, and actively employed themselves wherever they could fall in with an enemy ; at the same time they succeeded in harassing Chudleigh, and prevented his raising any effectual body, so as to render him formidable in this part of Devon.

Wearied with their labours, and finding, from want of sufficient ammuniton, that it was impossible they could stir the rebels in the strongholds of their retreat,

they once more retired to Tavistock, where they refreshed their men, arranged their affairs, and laid plans for future action. Notwithstanding these ardent exertions, and their generously throwing their own means into the common stock, the want of supplies, especially of ammunition, grievously troubled them. Indeed, the successful manner in which they had hitherto kept the enemy at bay, and in many instances had routed him, was surprising; since all their warlike stores had amounted to nothing more than those furnished by Sir Nicholas Slanning from Pendennis Castle, and what they had fortunately taken in action.

So formidable an obstacle was this want of supplies to all their measures, that, whilst at Tavistock, they were induced to listen to certain proposals made by the rebel gentlemen of Cornwall, "that a treaty," says Clarendon, "might be entered into, whereby the peace of the two counties of Cornwall and Devon might be settled, and the war removed into other parts." Though such a treaty was not welcome to the Royalists, yet, crippled in their means, and urged on by the popular cry around them for peace, they went so far as to consent to a truce, for the purpose of taking into consideration the terms of the treaty. The debates were preceded by every one receiving the sacrament, with a most solemn oath made by either party, that it was for no individual interest, but for the general peace and welfare of the West, to maintain the Protestant faith established by law in the Church of England, and the just rights and prerogative of the King, with the privileges of Parliament, &c.; that he who took the oath there acted without any equivocation, mental reservation, or

evasion whatsoever. The Royalists, judging the sincerity of their enemies by their own in this matter, and not supposing it to be possible that they could cherish any motives of guile, after having so solemnly disavowed them, were induced to retire into Cornwall to consider further on the treaty. But they speedily found that no reliance was to be placed on the amicable terms proposed by their enemies ; and soon after meeting with Captain Carteret, formerly the controller of the King's navy, who undertook to procure for them as much ammunition as they could desire to possess, in consequence of these circumstances the treaty commenced at Tavistock was never carried into effect. And so ready had the opposite party held themselves for hostilities, that on the very day after the cessation of preliminaries, Chudleigh marched on the town of Launceston and took it, whilst the inhabitants thought themselves secure, and were not provided for such a visit, in consequence of the late truce, and the hopes of its final adjustment. The Royalists, however, were not long in retaliating ; since, under the command of Sir Ralph Hopton, they speedily achieved that great victory at Stratton, where the Earl of Stamford and Chudleigh were completely routed.

The battle of Lansdown, near Bath, soon after followed ; there the great and good Sir Bevil Grenville lost his life. Sir Nicholas Slanning was also in this action, and displayed an intrepidity that resembled the heroic spirit of a chivalrous age. He is recorded on that day<sup>3</sup> to have performed actions nothing less wonderful than daring : he led on his followers in the mouth of cannon and musketry,

<sup>3</sup> See Clarendon, Prince, and Fuller.

whilst the balls were flying around him in all directions, towards the thickest of the fight. In this perilous position he remained unhurt, he seemed to carry with him 'a charmed life,' and in the eyes of his devoted men appeared almost more than mortal; he had, indeed, raised in them a spirit of enthusiasm which resembled his own; and the names of Grenville and Slanning struck terror into the hearts of the enemy. His next action was his last. He accompanied Prince Rupert to the assault made on Bristol, a short time after Lansdown fight; and, to the dismay of the whole army, fell before the walls of that city on the 26th of July, 1643. Many of his friends, and Trevanion, perished in the same encounter. Slanning was one of the four gentlemen, all of Cornwall or Devon in their birth, who were called 'the four wheels of Charles's wain.' Our county biographer, Prince, mentions a monody, composed at the time, on the death of these heroes, of which he gives two lines—

"The four wheels of Charles's wain,  
Grenville, Godolphin, Trevanion, Slanning, slain."

Certainly such men deserved to be celebrated in better verse. The Royalist and poet, the unfortunate Shirley, would have done justice to their memory, had he made their fall the subject of elegiac verse, as he afterwards did the fall of the King, in those immortal lines that would stir the coldest bosom with feelings of sympathy and pity.<sup>4</sup>

The visit of Prince Charles to our town, still the theme of tradition, is likewise recorded in history.

<sup>4</sup> The beautiful monody by Shirley, written after the death of Charles I., was introduced into one of his plays. It begins—

"The glories of our mortal state  
Are shadows, not substantial things."

It occurred in 1645, whilst the Parliament forces so closely invested the city of Exeter, on the east side by their works, and on the west by their men, that no relief could be conveyed to the citizens, who were in danger of suffering even from famine during the siege. The Prince, seeing the peril in which his father's affairs stood in the West at such a crisis, determined on calling a meeting, for the purpose of consultation, at Tavistock, and thither he summoned to attend in council all the noblemen and gentlemen within reach, in whom he could repose any confidence in a business of such import. Some jealousies, however, on the part of Lord Wentworth, and the spirit of intrigue so natural to Sir Richard Grenville, unfortunately interfered with the schemes of Charles at the moment, and his council was little more than one in name, in consequence of the non-attendance of the principal persons who were expected. The Prince, finding his presence would be absolutely necessary to compose discontents, remove jealousies, and bring things into better order, determined to advance into Devon with as many men as he could collect, to reinforce Lord Wentworth's party, so that Wentworth might no longer have cause to complain his men were not strong enough to bring the enemy to battle.

The day after Christmas-day, in the year 1645, Prince Charles quitted Truro, passed through Bodmin, and on the following morning entered Tavistock, where he found waiting for him the few persons who had obeyed his summons for the council. These were Brentford, Capel, Hopton, and Colepepper; and lastly came Sir Richard Grenville. Sir Richard sent on his three regiments of foot to Okehampton, under the command of General Molesworth, and the Cornish



men were expected to come up in a body in less than a week. At this time the blockade of Plymouth was maintained by General Digby ; so that a strong party of Royalists on every side were assembled, or assembling, to forward those plans on which Charles and his friends should determine to proceed. There was, however, a cause of anxiety that could not at this moment be so easily set at rest—the want of sufficient supplies for such a body of men.

Scarcely had the Prince reposed a few hours on his arrival at Tavistock, when he received a letter from the King, which is given at large by Clarendon, containing a command that, had he obeyed it, would at once have changed the whole aspect of the sovereign's affairs in the West. Charles informed his son that he was at Oxford, and had just dispatched a trumpet to London to demand a pass for his messengers, as he had resolved to propose a personal treaty with the rebels of that city. He believed they would be induced to entertain his proposals ; and if so, his real security would rest in the Prince, his eldest son, being in another country ; a circumstance which would make the rebels hearken and yield to reason. The King, therefore, proceeded to command the Prince to take the earliest opportunity of transporting himself into Denmark, France, or Holland, observing all security as to his passage, since nothing else was to be feared.

This epistle was written in the Lord Colepepper's ciphers : he was obliged, therefore, to be trusted with the letter, in order to decipher it ; and though at first the contents were held very secret, yet it was deemed better to lay them before the council ere an answer was sent off to the King.

The lords, after fully considering the matter, deemed the Prince's absence from the army in the West, to say nothing of the difficulty and hazard of getting him on shipboard, would be so discouraging, and produce such ill consequences at such a time, that the royal command could not be obeyed without doing a manifest injury to him who gave it. The Tavistock councillors therefore drew up a letter, to which each person signed his name, pointed out the dangers attending the plan for flight, &c., and dispatched it by the Oxford courier with all haste; yet fearing miscarriage, on the next day another messenger, bearing a copy of the same letter, was sent forward by another road, that the King might not be held in ignorance of their opinions, and the true state of his affairs in the West.

Shortly after this subject had been discussed, the Cornish trained bands arrived in Tavistock; they were above two thousand in number, and had marched up, many being taken from the mines, in good health and spirits, and willing to match their enemies on the first summons to the field. The arrival of these men cheered the hopes of the Royalist party, and they were received with every welcome.

Again the council of Tavistock resumed their deliberations; when it was strongly urged by the majority that the Prince should forthwith lead the Cornish trained bands and his own guard, then stationed near the town, to Totnes, where a magazine should be formed of all necessary provisions, and certain money and stores, collected in Cornwall, be forwarded by sea, and conveyed thence to this new treasury against a time of need, after relieving the present wants of the Royalists. Totnes, too, was

considered a convenient town whence the Prince might join his adherents at Exeter ; while, should the rebel army endeavour to intercept him, the distressed garrison of the city could then quit their stronghold, in which they had been literally held prisoners, and relieve themselves at such a juncture. The Prince might retreat or engage, as his interests and the position of his affairs should render it most advisable. These deliberations, and the intelligence forwarded from various parts of the country to the councillors, occupied some days, and were not hastily dismissed. We have a tradition here, likely enough to be true, that it rained so incessantly all the time the Prince was in our town, that he expressed his impatience at such abominable weather, and the recollection of it never forsook him.

The council having determined on their measures, a numerous force was about to march forward to Totnes, when the news came that the enemy had advanced, and beaten up Lord Wentworth's quarters in two several places. Soon after this Wentworth himself appeared in great agitation, not knowing the circumstances of his loss in either quarter ; for the accounts he had received were certainly exaggerated, though the truth was bad enough when fully ascertained. The Prince proposed marching, with all his force, immediately to Totnes ; but those about him feared that it must have already fallen into the hands of the enemy ; and that after the late disasters, he could not hope to rally his horse in any strength, till such of the troops as had been engaged in the late contests should have had two or three days' rest. In consequence of the disorderly retreat of the horse soldiery, it was also found absolutely necessary to

draw off the blockade from Plymouth; Tavistock therefore would no longer be a place of safety for Prince Charles. He was advised to hasten on to Launceston, and for his further security to leave the horse in charge of the Devon side of the river. From Cornwall it was proposed he should advance to the relief of Exeter; that city still remaining besieged and in great distress, being in want of even the necessaries of life.

The conduct of the retreat to Launceston, and bringing the supplies of food from Tavistock, was intrusted to Sir Richard Grenville, who performed that duty in so careless and heedless a manner, that, "besides the disorders he suffered in Tavistock by the soldiers," says Clarendon, "a great part of the magazine of victuals, and three or four hundred pair of shoes were there left and so lost." And so ill did Sir Richard conduct himself after this neglect of duty, that the Prince was obliged to commit him to prison in Launceston Castle. In a short time he was removed to the custody of the keeper of St. Michael's Mount, where he was held in durance, till, the Parliamentary forces gaining possession of Cornwall, Charles gave him leave to go beyond seas, that he might not fall into the hands of his enemies; Sir Richard Grenville's licentious and violent courses having not less than his loyalty rendered him abhorrent to the godly, whilst his reckless, intriguing, and tyrannical disposition had done the most irreparable injuries to the King's cause during the time he acted as General in the West.

During the Rebellion, in the year 1644, the house of Fitzford, in Tavistock, then belonging to Sir Richard Grenville by his marriage with Lady Howard,

held out for the King. It was then taken by Lord Essex, who seized, besides arms, stores, and two pieces of cannon, one hundred and fifty persons within the house, whom he made prisoners. It does not appear that Sir Richard was himself of the number. Lady Howard (I cannot help calling her by the name by which she is so universally known in this place) was the wife of four husbands. One more would have rendered her a fit rival for Chaucer's Wife of Bath; but if all, or only half, the stories told of her are true, she must have been a sort of female Blue Beard, not less formidable in her disposition than commanding in her person and her manners. She was born in Tavistock, nor will her fame be speedily forgotten; all the hobgoblin tales of later times are more or less connected with this remarkable woman, whom they represent as cruel, unfeeling, and wicked. I here purpose giving such account of her life as I have been able to collect from authentic materials or tradition.

I do not know in what year she was born; but as she was the daughter of that unhappy young man, Sir John Fitz, who, in the latter part of the reign of Elizabeth, killed the first Slanning of note, and soon after fell on his own sword, we are certain she must have been in existence previous to the reign of James I.; she was most probably an infant when her father died by his own hand: her mother was Gertrude, daughter of Sir William Courtenay, of Powderham Castle, Knt., early married to Sir John Fitz, and early left a widow with this one child, Mary, the heiress of immense wealth. Nature had been no less bountiful to this child than fortune; for she grew up remarkably handsome, was possessed of strong and

masculine powers of mind, and had attained more than the ordinary accomplishments of her sex or her station. She had many suitors, and the first gentlemen of the West were anxious to win the beautiful and gifted heiress of Fitzford.

Her first husband was Sir Alan Percy, Knt., sixth son to Henry Earl of Northumberland; he did not long survive his marriage, and she next gave her hand to Thomas, son and heir of the powerful Thomas Lord Darcy, Earl of Rivers. On again becoming a widow, her alliance was courted by the Earl of Suffolk, for his third son, Sir Charles Howard, who won her, but soon died, and left her still in the pride of rank, fortune, and beauty, one of the stateliest dames that frequented the court of Henrietta Maria. Here she cultivated the friendship of Buckingham, who, as we shall speedily find, exerted his influence with her so as to render her propitious to the addresses of one of his own dependents, Sir Richard Grenville, whose fortunes he had undertaken to improve. The duke thought a rich wife no small advance towards the work, and thus did the heiress of Fitz give herself to her fourth, last, and worst husband. There is some mystery attached to the way in which she managed her own fortune in all these marriages. At one period, as we shall presently see, it afforded a rich harvest for lawyers in a regular chancery suit, when a third party stepped in between man and wife and claimed the bone of contest; yet his power could not have been absolute though he obtained an award, since her only child, a daughter, being dead, or supposed dead, before herself she bequeathed her estates, Walreddon and Fitzford amongst the rest, to her kinsman, the Hon. Sir

William Courtenay, of Powderham Castle, Bart. And though Fitzford was afterwards purchased by the Russell family, Walreddon is the property of a Courtenay to this day.

The most considerable notices that I have found respecting Lady Howard occur in Clarendon; he does not mention her by name, but speaks of her in the first instance as the rich Devonshire widow who married Sir Richard Grenville; and lastly he refers to the Suffolk family, with whom she was connected by her previous marriage with Sir Charles Howard. These are proofs sufficient that it must be our Lady Howard, and no other, who has been immortalized by the great historian. Clarendon says that Sir Richard Grenville contrived to insinuate himself into the favour of the famous Duke of Buckingham; and his credit every day increasing with his patron, the favourite, "out of the generosity of his nature, resolved to raise him in his fortunes: towards the beginning whereof, by his countenance and solicitation, he prevailed with a rich widow to marry him, who had been a lady of extraordinary beauty, which she had not yet outlived, and though she had no great dower by her last husband, a younger brother of the Earl of Suffolk (Sir Charles Howard), yet she inherited a fair fortune of her own, near Plymouth; and was besides very rich in a personal estate, and was looked upon as the richest match of the West."

By the fair fortune of her own *near Plymouth*, Clarendon most likely means the house and estate of Walreddon; which, though distant but two miles from Tavistock, certainly is not so far from Plymouth but that such an expression might be used to point

out its situation in the neighbourhood of a large and well-known town. The historian thus continues :—

“ This lady, by the duke’s credit, Sir Richard Grenville, for he was now made a Knight and Baronet, obtained, and was thereby possessed of a plentiful estate upon the borders of his own county, where his own family had great credit and authority. The war being quickly at an end, and he deprived of his great patron, he had nothing now to depend upon but the fortune of his wife ; which though ample enough to have supported the expense a person of his quality ought to have made, was not large enough to satisfy his vanity and ambition ; nor so great as he, upon common reports, had promised himself by her. By not being enough pleased with her fortune, he grew less pleased with his wife ; who, being a woman of a haughty and imperious nature, and of a wit far superior to his, quickly resented the disrespect she received from him ; and in no degree studied to make herself easy to him. After some years spent together in these domestic, unsociable contestations, in which he possessed himself of all her estate, as the sole master of it, without allowing her out of her own any competency for herself, and indulging to himself all those licenses in her own house, which to women are most grievous, she found means to withdraw herself from him, and was with all kindness received into the family in which she had before married, and was always very much respected. Her absence was not ungrateful to him, till the tenants refused to pay him any more rent, and he found himself on a sudden deprived of her whole estate, which was all he had to live on : for it *now* appeared that she had, before her marriage with him, settled her entire fortune so abso-



lutely upon the Earl of Suffolk, that the present right was in him, and he required the rents to be paid to him. This begat a suit in chancery between Sir Richard Grenville and the Earl of Suffolk, before the Lord Coventry, who found the conveyances in law to be so firm, that he could not only not relieve Sir Richard Grenville in equity, but that in justice he must decree the land to the earl, which he did. This very sensible mortification transported him so much, that being a man who used to speak bitterly of those he did not love, after all endeavours to engage the earl in a personal conflict, he revenged himself upon him in such opprobrious language as the government and justice of that time would not permit to pass unpunished; and the earl appealed for reparation to the court of the Star Chamber, where Sir Richard was decreed to pay three thousand pounds to the King, who gave the fine likewise to the earl: Sir Richard was committed to the prison of the Fleet in execution for the whole six thousand pounds, which at that time was thought by all men to be a very severe and rigorous decree, and drew a general compassion towards the unhappy gentleman."

For some years Sir Richard endured this imprisonment, which made him the more bitter against his wife; but at length escaped his captivity and fled beyond seas. There he remained till the great changes in England having caused many decrees of the Star Chamber to be repealed, and the persons awarded to pay penalties to be absolved, he came home and petitioned to be heard in mitigation of his case. Before this came on, the rebellion broke out in Ireland, and Sir Richard Grenville was, on account of his military skill, sent thither as captain of a troop of horse. As

what I have to say of him must be principally confined to circumstances connected with his quarrel with his wife, I shall not follow him in his career either in Ireland or England. When the Civil Wars distracted this country, and the Parliament became openly rebels, Sir Richard joined the royal cause, and was soon appointed to a considerable command in the West. His wife inclined to the Parliament, so that one of the first things granted to him by the King was the sequestration of her estates to his own uses. "Upon which title," says Clarendon, "he settled himself in her house near Tavistock, and took the stock, and compelled the tenants to pay him their rents." If the house in which Sir Richard now made his residence might be Walreddon or Fitzford, we are not told, but most probably it was the latter, as it was situated so very near the town. At one period, when the King's affairs prospered in the West, and the Earl of Essex's forces were dissolved, so much was Grenville in favour with the royal party, that Charles granted him all the Earl of Bedford's estates (as well as Lady Howard's and those of the Drake family), by which the Abbey lands of Tavistock, and of Buckland Monachorum became his; and during the blockade at Plymouth, he resided in the latter place, which had formerly been inhabited by the great Sir Francis Drake. But Sir Richard Grenville was not a man to possess prosperity with moderation; he speedily abused all these favours, and his conduct in a public as well as in a private capacity soon proved that power could not have been intrusted to worse hands. Many of his acts were so notoriously disgraceful, tyrannical, and cruel, that they were at length formally brought as charges against

him before the Council, where he was especially required to appear in person, and answer for his misdeeds whilst governor of Lydford Castle. One circumstance of his cruelty deserves here particular notice, as it shows the bitterness and malice with which he entertained any recollection of the past quarrels with his wife. During the time of her proceedings against him in Chancery, she had employed an attorney-at-law, whose name was Brabant; he bore the character of being an honest man, and loyal to the King. He lived somewhere in this part of Devonshire. Many years elapsed after the decision of that suit against him, before Sir Richard became a man of so much importance by his high military command in the West. No sooner did Brabant learn the news of his arrival, than, well knowing he was not of a disposition to forget or to forgive an old adversary, he judged it prudent to keep as much as possible out of his way. Having occasion, however, to make a journey that would take him near Sir Richard's quarters, he disguised himself as well as he could, and put on a montero cap. Sir Richard, who probably had been on the look-out to catch him, notwithstanding all these precautions received intelligence of the movements of the man of law. He caused him to be intercepted on his road, made prisoner, and brought before him. In vain did Brabant protest that he was journeying on no errand but his own private affairs; for Sir Richard affecting, on account of his montero cap, to believe him to be a spy, without a council of war or any further inquiry ordered the luckless lawyer to be hanged on the spot; and thus murdered his wife's advocate, many years after he had committed the offence of managing her cause in the Chancery courts.

When Lady Howard (for she would now never be recognized by any other name in Tavistock) died I do not know, nor, where she was buried ; though I have heard a vague tradition that she ended her days in great mental agony, at some house she had near Okehampton, where, also, according to a more common tradition, she now runs every night in the shape of a hound, to perform penance, according to the wild legend before noticed concerning her. There is a story, too, but I am not enough acquainted with its detail to repeat it, which says something about one of her husbands (I do not know which) being drowned, whilst riding in his coach on the day of his marriage, in the deep pool, still called Fice's or Fitz's Pool, in the river Tavy. This tale I believe to be quite as true as that of the goblin hound, and the coach of bones.

We have a tradition here, silly enough in itself ; but, as it is current, I mention it. The story goes that when Prince Charles halted on his route into the West, after the battle of Worcester, certain diminutive equestrian figures, formed of pottery, were placed on the house-tops of every dwelling where he sought shelter, in order to denote speed and give a signal which was well understood by his friends. Tradition likewise asserts that after Worcester fight, he was for a short space of time in Tavistock, and left the town to seek a refuge in Hayne House, the seat of the Harris family, whence he attempted to make his way to the coast. There may be some truth in the last part of this story ; as, till within a few years, when Hayne House underwent alteration, I am informed, by my intelligent friend Mr. Hughes, that a very secret chamber, of small dimensions, built apparently within the walls, and entered by a softly-sliding

panel, used to be shown as the hiding-place of the young prince, afterwards Charles the Second, in his distressing flight.

At no very distant period, some ancient and extensive premises were pulled down in Tavistock, in order to clear the way for the butter-market. There was an inn attached to them, near a very old, picturesque archway, which gave entrance to a building whose roof was decorated with the little equestrian figures before noticed, which the elders here would have it were placed up as signals after the battle of Worcester, and that of course in the house so signalized the Prince himself lodged. If he really did lodge there, and very possibly he might, I have no doubt it was during the time he underwent the rainy penance, with the lords of his council, in the year 1645, before he fled to Launceston, when Sir Richard Grenville left to the town that legacy of old shoes to remember the royal visit, recorded by Clarendon. In the house just named there was a very large apartment, beautifully panelled with carved oak, and a coat of arms of the time of Elizabeth, having the crown between the letters 'E. R.,' and the words beneath, '*Vivat Regina.*'

These premises were in parts much older than the days of good Queen Bess; they formed, indeed, a wing to those antique buildings said to have been the residence of Orgar, Earl of Devon, and of Ordulph, his son. They corresponded with another wing, terminating with the archway at the bottom of Kilworthy Lane; but that archway is of the Tudor age, and certainly not older than the reign of Henry the Seventh; though this is a fact which no architect could ever persuade the good people of Tavistock to believe. They will have it that it is of Saxon date.

One of the most curious traditionary stories respecting the days of rebellion we received from a poor mad woman of this place, who in consequence of being harmless is suffered to go free; and as this story is also told by those who are in their right senses, I shall mention it, though the poor 'mazed' woman has an undoubted privilege to claim it as her own, since it relates to one of her family in former days. The method she took to communicate it to Mr. Bray was not a little singular. She wrote him a letter, and dropped it in the post. This epistle, though it was wild and disordered in several parts, yet showed that she possessed some 'method in her madness;' for whilst, among other things, she told him that several gentlemen had given her half-a-crown a-piece, she very significantly added, 'Go thou and do likewise.' The story she told concerning her relative in the times of Charles I., I had heard before from my husband's mother, who was a great collector of old tales, of all ages and all kinds. Her version of the story enabled me to comprehend the poor woman's, which was somewhat confused.

The Parliament forces, after they captured Fitzford House, made wild work in the town with whatever belonged to the Royalist party, or had any connection with the old established order of things. To this troop of Parliamentarians I have always attributed the injuries sustained by the monuments, &c., in our church. I consider them guilty of having rendered noseless Judge Glanville and his wife; of having knocked out whatever might remain of the painted glass in the church-lights; and of doing the same in the vestry, where we know, by the church-wardens' accounts, there was a new painted window

set up in the days of Richard II. Nothing was more offensive to the Puritans than such decorations : they made war, indeed, on all saints, as they stood in Gothic brilliancy, whenever the sun shone out, and showed them no quarter. But to Jenny's story ; for, something like her poor wits, I have been wandering.

The Parliament troopers, knowing that the honest vintner who kept the wine-cellar at the *King's Arms* was a Royalist, determined that his wine should never more be drawn to pledge royal healths ; and thinking that the safest way to remove the temptation would be to get rid of the cause, they very soon resolved to wash that down their throats.

The daughter of the vintner was, poor thing, in a consumption ; but being a girl of spirit, and her mind remaining in firmer condition than her body, she bethought herself, when she heard what was going on, whether or not her wasted and ghastly appearance might not be made of service at this crisis. So she resolutely snatched up—neither dagger nor poniard, though she was about to play the heroine, but—a white table-cloth ; and as all spirits, real or otherwise, never walk but in white robes, the table-cloth made a magnificent mantle, for a ghost of the very first order. Thus attired, she stole down stairs, and took her post in the dingy confines of an old wine cellar, situated at the extremity of a long, narrow, formidable, and very ominous-dark passage.

The vintner's daughter, though she was no ghost, looked very like one, and placing herself against the cellar door, she stood, 'like patience on a monument,' smiling at her own device to cheat the troopers. These she speedily heard making their way down

the steps ; she groaned a groan, and stood still. The corporal, who headed the marauding party, started at the sound, as his eye caught the pale, thin, white, and shadowy figure that in a motionless attitude, stood with upraised and menacing hand before the door. Soon after the ghost moved, and making as if she would advance upon the whole party, sent every mother's son of them flying with fright ; up the steps they ran, much faster than they had descended. The cellar escaped rifling ; the house was instantly abandoned ; nor did they even stay to carry off the booty they had collected above stairs. These are the particulars of the story of Jenny's grandmother's great grandfather's daughter, in the days of Charles I. She adds, in her letter, that "the young woman, who showed such resolution, died"—I suppose she means of the consumption that so well fitted her to perform the part of a ghost in the presence of the troopers.

The following curious piece in verse I insert here, because, though I know not the author's name,<sup>5</sup> I have heard it is considered to be the composition of a schoolmaster of this town, who held that office towards the latter part of the reign of Charles II. If this is true or false, I cannot determine ; but of the poet we may venture to say, whoever he might be, the same as Fuller said of Scaliger, that he is one who writes "as if he rather snorted than slept on Parnassus, for his verses sound better to the brain than to the ear." A very rare old printed copy of them, on a large sheet of paper, like a bill stuck against a wall, has been lent me by Mr. Crapp, of

<sup>5</sup> I have since discovered that the name of the author of *Tavestock's Encomium* was Long.



this town. Here is the copy. Our chronicler in rhyme calls this production of his muse

“A PANEGYRICK POEM ;

OR, TAVESTOCK'S ENCOMIUM.

“Within this countie's bowels lies a moor,  
Of old called Dart, down from whose mountains roar  
Combining fountains, which without delay  
Towardes the ocean do their streams display ;  
And (as if over-tired) make their graves  
Betwixt the northern and the southern waves.  
West, and beneath this dismall forest lies  
A fruitful vale, in form triangle-wise,  
Wherein stands TAVESTOCK, whose glorious state  
Hath much been dark'ned by the checks of Fate.  
But yet her Abbies and her mon'ments' story  
Are strong assertors of her ancient glory ;  
Trading (the life of places) here's to pull  
The finest locks of all the Cornish wool,  
This into yarn, her people doth convert,  
Which other tradesmen elsewhere impart,  
To make those famous serges, which are hurled  
By ship from England through the boundless world :  
Yet not the meanest part of wool there brought,  
Is by herself into fine Kersies wrought,  
Whose noted goodness in the strength and wear  
Need not the passport of the Aulniger.  
Her suburbs or precincts six miles do stretch,  
Upon the east and westward four do reach,  
One mile towards the south she branches forth  
And claimeth two miles straight upon the north ;  
Abounds with tythings and fair villages,  
Woods, waters, pleasant groves and tillages ;  
Her grazing pasture, Carmel-like for feeding,  
Her mountain's top like Bashan hills for breeding.  
Her earth is fruitful, and her ground is free,  
To lend all sorts of grain to industry.  
So famed for leeks and onions in this isle,  
As if she suck'd her fat from Egypt's Nile,

Her well-filled channels for the people's use  
Through every street their christal streams diffuse,  
Those (pallisadoed with revengeful power)  
The stony pavements do most neatly scour ;  
Nor are they barren, for her shallowest brook  
Affords rich matter for the angler's hook,  
Salmon, trout, peal, and other luscious fish,  
With her's no dainty, but an usual dish.  
Store likewise of all fennish fowl do swim .  
In winter time upon sweet Tavy's brim ;  
And other kind of covies fly and hop  
From each valley to each mountain's top ;  
Her fields and woods yield likewise noblest game,  
With hound and hawk the hunters range the same,  
To start the hare, and rouse the fallow deer,  
Pursue the fox with ho ! see ho ! see here.  
Her air without is wholesome, and within  
Her bowels stored with choice copper and tin ;<sup>6</sup>  
But yet observe her more transcendent worth,  
Her happy soil hath nurtured and brought forth  
More noted men than all their bordering towns,  
Or any one place in Britannia's bounds,  
Whose names have been and are of such account  
They've triumph rode from Berwick to the Mount,  
Upon the wings of fame for poetry,  
Profoundest law, and school-divinity.  
Rhetorick, gosple preaching, and such parts  
As are most proper to the sons of arts.  
Go to the Inns of Court, and there demand  
Who most renowned amongst the gown-men stand ?  
Who could unfold the enigmas of the law,  
Resolve thy doubts, find or correct a flaw,  
Who most employ'd among the sages were  
At Common Pleas, King's Bench, or Chancery bar,  
Whose chambers most the thronging clients ply'd,  
They'll name three men brought up by Tavy's side.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> One of the four stannaries of Devon.

<sup>7</sup> The author of this piece has the following notes, printed on the side of the verses, explanatory of his allusions to the great men in question. Note one is—"John Glanville, Serjeant-at-Law, one of the

Go to our Oxford University,  
 Ask who is best skilled in divinity,  
 Who hath the fathers or the school-men read,  
 They'll single out a man at Tav'stock bred.<sup>8</sup>  
 Enquire agen in whom there may be found  
 Galen and Paracelsus' virtues bound,  
 Whose physick seldom due success did want,  
 And thou'lt assigned be to a Tav'stock plant.<sup>9</sup>  
 Thence walk into our great Metropolis,  
 Demand for preaching who most noted is,  
 Whose notions are most quaint, and whose great pains  
 Are most enamelled with rhetoric strains,  
 Ask who for those things hath the lawrell won,  
 And they'll assure thee 'tis a Tav'stock man.<sup>1</sup>  
 Go ask the famous poets of our times  
 Who best could fancy in seraphick rhimes,  
 Whose muse drank deepest at Font Hellicon,  
 They'll tell Tav'stock Browne's profoundly done.<sup>2</sup>  
 Go coast Great Britain's Isle, and in each creek  
 Among the noble sons of Neptune seek  
 Who has swam farthest in the liquid seas,  
 Or who first ranged the world's antipodes :  
 Who round about the world's vast globe did roll,  
 Even from the arctick to the antarctick pole ;  
 They will with one consent this verdict make,  
 'Twas OUR IMMORTAL MORTAL, TAV'STOCK DRAKE.<sup>3</sup>  
 Get also 'mongst great Mars his thundering crew,  
 And all his warlike champions over view,

judges of the Common Pleas. Sir John' Glanville, Kt., his son,  
 Serjeant-at-Law. Sir John Maynard, Kt., Serjeant-at-Law."

<sup>8</sup> "Dr. Joseph Maynard, late Rector of Exon Coll., Oxon."

<sup>9</sup> "The worthy Peter Elliot, Doctor of Physick, Oxon."

<sup>1</sup> The author says in his note—"The Rev. Dr. Calamy, London, hath enjoyed this man's labour more than twenty years." This would go far to prove that the poem was written in the time of William and Mary ; as Benjamin Calamy (here alluded to) served long in London, and there died in their reign.

<sup>2</sup> "Thomas Browne, born in Tavestock."

<sup>3</sup> Note three says—"The renowned heroe, Sir Francis Drake, born at Crowndle, in Tavestock."

Search whether can be found again the like  
 For noble prowess to our TAV'STOCK PIKE,<sup>4</sup>—  
 In whose renowned never-dying name  
 Live England's honour, and the Spaniard's shame ;  
 Advance then, Tav'stock, and no longer lye  
 Enrolled in sheets of such obscurity.  
 May generations on thyself insert  
 Proportion'd honour to thy great desert ;  
 And when that Envy dare to wound thy fame,  
 Let her grow leaner by thy rising name."

Having now given you this very curious encomium on our town, I will not venture to add a word more in its praise. The author certainly might be styled our Laureate ; and but for his poem we should never have known that we had such a 'Tav'stock plant' as the "worthy Peter Elliot, Doctor of Physic," nor that "Dr. Joseph Maynard, of Exon Coll., Oxford," was also 'Tav'stock bred.' I doubt the author's correctness about Calamy, and though I have taken much pains to satisfy that doubt, hitherto I have been unsuccessful. Benjamin Calamy was the son of the Nonconformist, and came into the Established Church ; he is spoken of by Sherlock as eminent for his piety, learning, and eloquence ; but where he was born is not stated.

<sup>4</sup> Note four states—"Captain Richard Pike, who fought three Spaniards at once, chosen out of an army of six thousand, and *beat them.*" This must have been the famous Captain Pike, whose name so often occurs in the voyages of Drake.

## LETTER XXXIII.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

Maristow ; its ancient Church—Tomb of Sir Thomas Wise—Sydenham House—Delightful Woods—Interior Courts—Arms of Wise—The old Gentleman who was the former Proprietor—The Banquet-room—Sydenham garrisoned for King Charles—Taken by Col. Holbourn in 1645—The left Gable in a ruinous Condition—Great Staircase—The old Pictures—Nine Daughters of Sir Thomas Wise—Interesting Portrait of the stately Lady Mary Cary—Portrait of Col. Arthur Tremayne—Portrait of Bridget Hatherleigh, Heiress of Sydenham—Portrait of a Lady, probably painted by Sir Peter Lely—Curious Furniture—Cabinets—Hangings, Arras, &c.—Magnificent Horse Furniture for the Sheriff's Lady—The Shifting Panel—The Secret Door—The Concealed Staircase—Eccentricities of the late Mr. Tremayne—Discovery of original Letters of the great Sir Bevil Grenville—Mr. D'Israeli written to concerning them—Amusing Anecdotes of old Mr. Tremayne—Story of Fuseli's *Nightmare*, &c.—Arms of Tremayne—Antiquity of the Family—Twin Brothers in the time of Elizabeth—Lamerton Church—Collacombe House—Old Monuments—Rowe, the Poet, born at Lamerton—A Tremayne founded a Hospital at Tavistock, *temp.* Richard II.—Thomas Tremayne Father of sixteen Children—Edmund, the second Son, followed the fortunes of Edward, Earl of Devon—Racked in the Tower to discover the Secrets of Elizabeth in Mary's time—The twin Brothers, Andrew and Nicholas Tremayne—They join the English Forces in France—Fall before Newhaven in 1563—Their Epitaph—Excursion to Meavy—The Church—The antique Oak—Set off for Sheeps Tor—Up-hill Road—Beautiful scenery—Village of Sheeps Tor—The Church—Character of Sheeps Tor ; its Blocks of Granite—The Pixies' House - Difficult and dangerous of access—

Meavy—Circumstances attending the Death of two Persons, by Cholera, at Sheeps Tor, in 1832.

*Vicarage, Tavistock, March 5th, 1832.*

I PURPOSE in this letter giving you some account of an excursion we made, in the autumn of 1831, to a very interesting old house in this neighbourhood; and one that deserves notice in an historical view, as, during the Great Rebellion, it was gallantly defended in support of the royal cause.

In our way to Sydenham, for so is the old house called, we visited the church of Maristow, which is beautifully situated on a hill, with a range of fine and venerable lime-trees in front of the sacred edifice. There cannot be a doubt this building is of great antiquity, as we observed above the interior doorway, that leads from the porch into the body of the church, a Saxon arch. I have no doubt it was the remains of the original entrance. This curious arch was deeply buried in whitewash. The font is also Saxon, and of very rich and singular workmanship.

In the church we found an elaborate but heavy tomb of Sir Thomas Wise, Knt., and his lady (Sir Thomas was the builder of Sydenham), *temp.* Charles I. The effigy of the knight, the size of life, represents him in armour, lying under a canopy, with his wife by his side. The female head is very characteristic, and has that fleshy appearance considered by artists as forming so great a merit in the works of the chisel. What a pity her nose has been knocked off! I saw no inscriptions; but when I recollected that this tomb had been erected in the days of the unfortunate Charles, and that the church

was near Sydenham House, I felt quite certain that the violence evidently employed in its mutilation had been the handiwork of the Covenanters; and I thought of Clarendon and Sir Walter Scott, who have immortalized the days of rebellion. The hands of both figures had been knocked off; and oh, monstrous misappropriation! some wise modern, wishing to repair the damage, had not only made the small mistake of placing the large rough hands of the good knight on the lady, but had also joined to and decorated his stumps with her slender and delicate fingers! We saw the figures of the children round four sides of the tomb; these were all statues placed on a deep ledge. They also had not been spared in the war made upon the church. At the back of the monument (for the faces of the two principal recumbent figures look to the east) there were seen kneeling, facing each other, a youth and a damsel praying at a desk. These effigies were likewise in the dresses of the time of Charles I. There were also, on the ledge, two cradles in marble, with infants in them; the babes being attired in the richest lace, which was most delicately carved; and there was another little child represented sitting in a chair, and dressed in lace from head to foot. The cradles were square in shape, and not made to rock; the children were all as chubby as young cherubs are usually represented.

On quitting the church, we continued our ride through a wild, hilly, and picturesque scene, till we arrived at Sydenham, the object of our journey. This most interesting old house was commenced in the time of Elizabeth, and finished in that of James I., by the knight whose effigy is above described.

The plan of the house forms the letter **E**, a compliment often paid by builders to the maiden queen. Sydenham lies in a valley; a clear stream runs in front of it, leaving space for the road. Over this stream there is a bridge, above which, rising from the banks, hang some fine old trees. On crossing the road runs up a very steep hill, through a thick wood of such beauty that nothing more delightful in its kind can be found in Devon. It is to be lamented that a portion of this noble wood was felled by the late possessor, who thus turned the picturesque plantations of his forefathers into money; and truly he could have had no love of old trees, for he actually chose for his lopping the very spot that is seen from the house. This is now replanted; but years must pass away before it can regain anything like its original aspect. The high lands in the immediate vicinity of this princely domain are beautiful in their forms, and, for the most part, richly clothed with wood.

Before the house, which is surrounded by a wall, a pair of very high open-worked iron gates give access to the interior of the court. There the entire front of the extensive range of buildings presents at one view a magnificent example of the domestic architecture of the age of Elizabeth. Above the central doorway, to which you ascend by a flight of steps, is seen, within a niche, the arms of Wise, carved, painted, and gilt. The picturesque gables that project from the body of the mansion to make the shape of the letter **E**, the mullions, the windows, the grey colour of the stone, the massive but not inelegant architecture, all strike the eye, and excite so much admiration that one cannot but regret the days



are gone by when such a house as this was the distinguishing and necessary possession of every old English family in the country. I was not a little vexed to find that the gable, to the right hand as we entered, had been despoiled of its beautiful old windows, and common modern sashes substituted ! Those removed, judging from what were left in the opposite and corresponding gable, had been very large and handsome, indeed beautiful in their construction, and must have been quite as warm ; so that there was no accounting for the change, except that it must have been a whim of a certain old Mr. Tremayne, the father of the late possessor of Sydenham, who was born in the year 1708, and died in 1808. He certainly entertained a particular dislike to everything in true taste, or as it originally stood ; for this old gentleman it was who actually took the trouble, not only to alter the windows, but to paint a magnificently-carved oak staircase with the colours of pink and white. A large room, called the banquet-room, likewise carved in oak, in a way to excite admiration, and most tastefully gilt in various parts, so as to relieve the dark brown of the oak in the carving, he caused to be buried in common house-paint ; and had the massive granite chimneypiece, in the great hall, painted likewise. I would have assigned to this worthy a paint-pot for his arms, with two brushes proper, by way of supporters. Yet I ought to speak very reverently of him, for he was the father of my husband's godfather.

On entering, I was somewhat disappointed in the hall ; it is built too low for such a mansion. Several coats of arms, painted and gilt, but not by the old gentleman, adorn its sides. This hall bears the date

of 1658, the time the house underwent some repairs ; no doubt they were needed after the Civil Wars. Sydenham was garrisoned for King Charles, and taken by the Parliamentary forces, commanded by Colonel Holbourn, in January, 1645. One gable of the house is in a very ruinous condition ; we were told it had never been finished. This we considered a mistake ; and that the ruinous state in which it is now seen was most probably the consequence of the siege it underwent in behalf of royalty. It is very likely the family to whom it belonged could not afford such extensive repairs as were required to restore the building to its original condition ; since the Restoration found them poor, having suffered severely by fine, sequestration, and imprisonment ; favours which the liberty men of Cromwell's time were particularly free in conferring upon all those who feared God and honoured the King after the old fashion. I never can believe that a man like Sir Thomas Wise should build this house, live to see it finished, bequeath it to his son Edward, and leave one gable of it imperfect in the interior ; the very carved doors, which still hang decaying on their rusty hinges, contradict the assertion. It is far more likely that the Parliament troopers made wild work in the house ; or that this gable had been converted into guard-rooms, &c., for stores and ammunition ; no wonder, therefore, it was sacked and ruined.

I saw the place in too hurried a manner (not wishing to intrude upon the present proprietors, who most kindly indulged us with seeing it) to make very minute observations ; but I was particularly struck with the great staircase ; so noble in its proportions, so richly carved, and lighted by a window above

eighteen feet in height. We ascended, and went from room to room above. The pictures were numerous, and of great interest. Nine daughters of Sir Thomas Wise, all beauties, and each painted on a separate canvas, still shone in the loveliness of youth, and in the graceful dresses of the time of Charles I. They are represented with the hair low on the crown of the head, whilst only a few short, thin curls play over the forehead, and hang in full and thick clusters on the neck; through whose ringlets might be seen, in some of them, the double drop earring of pearl, so common at that period. Several of these heads were really very handsome, and, though not painted by Vandyke, were far superior to the productions of the subsequent English painters (Sir Peter Lely and Kneller excepted) till the days of Reynolds and Romney, when the English school of portrait painting was, in great excellence, revived.

In another room we saw a picture, though much decayed and without a frame, of great interest. This represented the stately daughter of the Viscount Carrickfergus, married first to Sir Thomas Wise, by whose side she rests in the church, secondly to Mr. T. Harris, and lastly to Sir Henry Carew (pronounced Cary). In the picture there is the grand, self-satisfied, and studied air of a very fine lady, not very beautiful, but having on all the decorations of beauty she could possibly hang about her whilst sitting for her picture. The dress is of the time of Charles I., but the most gay I ever saw of that period; and as a proof that she was determined to exhibit something out of the common mode, suspended by a chain and fastened to her bosom, she had, upon a rich lace collar, an enormous watch that very much resembled a warm-

ing-pan. This in her day was a more rare trinket than it is at present; but I never before recollect having seen a watch so placed in an old picture. She displays, also, a large ring on one of her fingers, on which, according to tradition, there was engraved this posy in allusion to her three husbands:—

“Thrice happy Mary  
Harris, Wise, and Cary.”

This portrait is altogether so curious, that it well deserves to be framed, very carefully cleaned, and engraved. Cleaning pictures no ignorant person should attempt; indeed in this collection I observed three clever flower and fruit pieces, which had been really beautifully painted, entirely spoilt by the delicate glazing of the transparent colours on an opaque body (the mode generally adopted by Venetian artists) having been destroyed by some rude hand in cleaning their surface. I regret I had not time to note the names of all the different pictures that struck us as being of interest. Amongst others there was a very good one, in the school of Vandyke, probably by a pupil of that great master, which represented the sister of the famous Mr. St. John, who acted so much in concert with Hampden and Pym during the Rebellion. This lady was, by marriage, connected with the family of Tremayne, hence we find her picture preserved at this house. Over the chimney-piece, in the same lower apartment, we observed the portrait of the gallant Colonel Arthur Tremayne, who lived to see the monarchy for which he had fought and bled restored, and to wed with fair Mistress Bridget Hatherleigh, who at that period had become, for want of male issue, the heiress of

Sydenham. Bridget was granddaughter, in the female line, to Sir Thomas Wise (for his son Edward died unmarried), and by her marriage with the brave Colonel the house and lands of Sydenham came to the family of Tremayne. The very letter of introduction presented by the Colonel when he came wooing to the young heiress is still preserved in the house ; and I am promised a copy of this very curious epistle. The writer, I understand, in introducing the lover, did not mince the matter ; but tells the fair Bridget, that as Colonel Arthur's lands and her own lie so near together, she earnestly recommends that both estates may be legally made 'conjugal.'

How far the lady relished this reference to her property instead of herself, I do not know ; but as the Colonel's picture represents a fine soldier-like looking man, one that would speak frankly in love or in war, I dare say she was well pleased ; and he probably thought more favourably of Bridget's beauty than I did of the record of it on the canvass that still hangs near his own. I fancied I could detect a scowl on the brow, and an air of firmness and authority that told tales of a love of petticoat government. I saw many other old pictures, and heard the names of most of them. There were two or three gloomy-looking Roundheads : they had no business amidst so much loyalty. There was also a very clever picture, about the time of Sir Peter Lely, of a lady remarkable for the grace and elegance of her form. The name of the painter was unknown ; but from the style and beautiful colouring in the flesh tints, I could not help thinking this was a portrait by Sir Peter himself.

In one of the sleeping chambers there is a splendid red bed, of the age of Charles I. It had three 'prince's feathers,' as they are called, within the head of the bed, formed of the same stuff with the furniture. The whole was lofty and elegant, unlike any modern couch, and very low and comfortable for the sleeper. I saw, likewise, a great number of old chests; and felt, I confess, a good deal of woman's curiosity to be peeping into them; fancying that possibly there might be hidden some treasured narrative, some forgotten papers of the eventful times that every object in the house brought vividly before the mind. There were Indian chests too, and old chairs, and rich chased metal tables, and the most costly ancient cabinets, that again set me longing to be peeping—and I thought of the old names by which the little drawers and boxes in such were called—the *shuttles*; and I thought too of an old story that I have since turned into a tale, about a lady who died of a broken heart, and would never tell the cause—but when on her death-bed she pointed with her hand to the cabinet that stood near, and said, 'Lift the second shuttle.' She paused; and ere she could speak again, the hand of death was upon her. Her husband rushed from the bed; and scarcely had she breathed her last, when he found too truly the cause of her melancholy fate revealed by raising 'the shuttle.' Before her marriage she had been beloved by a gentleman of great worth, and, more in caprice than from any real displeasure, had slighted him. In a moment of wounded feeling, he mounted his horse, rushed to the battle, and after standing near Charles I. to the last, fell on Newbury field, covered with wounds. The lady had married

an officer in the Parliament forces, and convinced, even on her bridal-day, that she could neither forget her old love nor be happy with her new, to whom her father had given her hand, she wrote a letter revealing the secret of her soul, and begging to be buried near William. On the envelope were these words, beneath a black seal :—

“When I am dead and cold,  
Then let the truth be told.”

This apartment at Sydenham, its furniture, the bed, the cabinet, all of the time of Charles I., so exactly suited as an appropriate scene for this melancholy tale, that imagination in a moment suggested the rest of the picture; and I fancied I could see the dying lady, and the husband, and all the painful circumstances of that event. In the chamber I am describing, a whole and complete collection of the domestic furniture of the period might be found, even to the elegant toys for the ladies; such as letter-stands, pin-cushions, a box for needlework, &c. The chairs were covered with what is called the cut and double-piled red velvet, in the most beautiful patterns. I saw also in this house, what I had now and then read of in old books, a chamber hung with ‘watchet hangings.’ These hangings were of damask, within a frame of oak, and were suspended in the compartments of the wainscot. It occurred to me that here might be seen the distinction between the ‘arras’ and the ‘hangings.’ The hangings being, as above stated, hung like pictures on the walls; the arras (originally a rich stuff, manufactured at Arras, in France) being, on the contrary, a piece of long and loose tapestry hanging from the ceiling to the floor, so that any one could slip behind

it, as did Polonius, when he paid so dear for hiding. There is still to be seen at Cothele House, in this neighbourhood, a fine specimen of a chamber hung with arras.

At Sydenham we saw too, what I am sure Sir Samuel Meyrick would gladly possess, to place in his superb collection of old armour, at Goodrich Court. One of the Tremayne family having been, to use the old phrase, "pricked down for sheriff of the shire," his lady, who I suppose on some state occasion was to ride with her husband in his public capacity, had such a set of horse furniture for her palfrey, as exceeds in magnificence anything I ever fancied of the kind. It is of red velvet, so beautifully fine and closely woven, that not even the smallest root of a thread could be seen; and so carefully was it preserved, that it looked as if just new from the shop. These housings were made to slip over the saddle, and hang loose by the sides like a horse-cloth. They are most elegantly ornamented with the finest silver lace, that appears almost new; and the crupper, &c., is decorated with a number of silver ornaments representing cockle-shells, chased in the most delicate manner. We saw also the holsters for the sheriff's pistols, and very splendid they were. The whole of these things did not appear to be older than the time of William and Mary: I judge of their age by their corresponding with the like decorations seen in the pictures of that period.

In the banquet-room, where there was such a magnificent carved oak panelling (painted white by the old gentleman), there was one panel contrived to open as a door, but not having the slightest appearance that it would do so when seen closed. This



opens to a dark, stone closet, with a flight of winding stairs that leads up to the very top of the house, and is secretly connected with other chambers. For many years it has not been explored, owing to its ruinous condition. This is a pity, for the search might lead to the discovery of something hidden during the Civil Wars. How much I should like, assisted by the light of a torch, to explore these unknown holes and corners of Sydenham; and to disturb the owls and bats that, I dare say, have contrived through some aperture to take possession. I can well believe that the house might have been searched, even by Cromwell's troopers, and the dark closet and the winding stairs have never been detected.

Mr. Tremayne, the present worthy and respected proprietor, does not often reside in this princely but decaying mansion. He inherited it by will from the last old gentleman, who died unmarried, and who, though he had never seen him, left it to him on account of his bearing the name, and being a younger branch of the family, with whom however he had kept up no connection.

The late Mr. Tremayne was a good man, kind, sociable, but eccentric. Being single, rich, and having much Church patronage, he had many hangers-on; and his house and friendship were objects eagerly sought after by the poor clergy, who longed to find subsistence in the solid patronage of a living. One of those on whom he had bestowed the latter died before his friend, and he left Mr. Tremayne all he had in the world. Dr. Geach, an eminent physician, late of Plymouth, wrote on him the following epitaph, which is certainly somewhat equivocal; for one cannot but perceive that it may have been meant as

a compliment to the deceased at the expense of his brethren :

“ This was a grateful priest ; his wealth, though small,  
He to his patron gave, who gave him all.”

Whilst we were conversing with the present proprietor, that gentleman communicated to us the following most interesting circumstance :—

Some years since Mr. Tremayne represented the county of Cornwall, and whilst canvassing for votes he chanced to solicit the suffrage of a respectable farmer, who lived in an old house called Stow, in the county. Stow was once the residence of the great Sir Bevil Grenville, who lost his life in Lansdown fight, near Bath. The farmer had discovered in a lumber-room of the house an old trunk ; when, on examining its contents, he found it contained a mass of papers, all of the time of Charles I., and amongst them a variety of *original letters* : some addressed to Sir Bevil Grenville ; others, copies of letters written by him, in his own hand.

Mr. Tremayne told us that the farmer was a man of a strong mind, naturally inquisitive after knowledge ; and so well had he employed his evenings over these curious documents, that he had made himself familiar with their contents, and showed Mr. Tremayne many of the most interesting. The subjects of one or two of these that gentleman repeated to us. There was a letter by a friend addressed to Sir Bevil, endeavouring to dissuade him from joining the King's cause ; and pointing out the dangers to himself and family that must arise from his doing so. With this was found the copy of Sir Bevil's answer, giving, to use Mr. Tremayne's own words, ‘ in manly language’

his reasons, alike generous and disinterested, for the determination he had formed to join the injured King. Another admirable letter was addressed by Sir Bevil to the tutor of his son at Oxford, charging him to hold the lad prepared to follow in the steps of his father, as he was resolved not to withhold his son from doing his duty to God and to the King. Clarendon, if my memory serves me truly, speaks of this youth, and says he was but fifteen years old when he took the field.

I understood from Mr. Tremayne that all these letters, so curiously discovered, were highly honourable to Sir Bevil; and that they threw some additional light on the conduct of the royal cause in the West. I felt so deeply interested in the account thus given, that I begged to know if it were possible we might be suffered to examine the papers, and to take copies. Mr. Tremayne told me he had copied one or two sentences of one of the letters, which I should hereafter see, but that the letters themselves were no longer within reach; for, as he had talked a good deal about them after his interview with the farmer, the affair came at length to the knowledge of Lord Carteret, the proprietor of Stow, who sent for the whole collection, and removed them to his own house.

On our return from Sydenham, Sir Bevil Grenville and his letters still occupied my mind. I knew that Mr. D'Israeli was then employed in completing a work so valuable to English history, his *Commentaries on the Life and Reign of Charles I.* I knew how much that gentleman sought after and valued original papers; and I could not help thinking what a prize these would be to him. I was not acquainted with

him; but I thought that circumstance ought not to be of sufficient consideration to prevent my doing what might prove a real service to literature; and, if the truth must be spoken, my enthusiastic veneration both for King Charles and Sir Bevil Grenville made me feel a wish that these papers, honourable no doubt to the memory of both, should be brought forward by one so able to do them justice. This consideration gave me courage; I procured from my own publisher the address of Mr. D'Israeli, and wrote him a letter informing him all I knew of the circumstance, and pointing out where the treasure might be found. I was soon gratified by the most handsome letter of thanks from Mr. D'Israeli, who had, even before he answered me, set on foot some inquiry, but had not then met with any friend who could give him an introduction to Lord Carteret in order to see the papers. Surely the name and pursuits of one who has done so much for English literature would have been sufficient.

On this subject I have only to add that, not long before I commenced my letter to you, I received a piece of information which I most heartily hope may have arisen from some mistake, for doubtless it cannot be true; namely, that these curious papers have been destroyed. If they have *not* been destroyed, it is to be hoped they will one day see the light, as valuable documents of the times in which the writers flourished, and Sir Bevil perished in so good a cause.

I have heard Mr. Bray relate many circumstances connected with Sydenham, that occurred whilst he visited there when a child. One or two of these are not a little amusing; I shall therefore endea-

vour to repeat them, as nearly as I can in his own words :—

“ The old house, the stories connected with it, and the air of antiquity which everything presented at Sydenham, made a deep impression on me when a boy ; so that my visits there were not a little accompanied with a feeling of awe ; and one of them was made in a manner that astonished others as much as it did myself. My godfather (who used at sixty to be styled *young* Mr. Tremayne, as his father, who was living at ninety, was called *old* Mr. Tremayne) one day brought me from school near Exeter. Our progress was slow, for though his carriage in which he travelled, might be called light, yet the roads were heavy and so bad, that the shades of night surrounded us before we got to the end of our journey. My godfather, who always travelled with a servant mounted as an outrider, commanded lights ; when, to my inexpressible surprise on witnessing the preparation, a long pole (stowed somewhere about the carriage in readiness for the purpose) was produced, at the top of which was affixed a large globular lantern, that on being lighted resembled a fire-balloon, and made a most extraordinary appearance. Mounted and carrying aloft pole and lantern, the outrider went before the coach to the end of our journey, causing every ‘ belated peasant ’ we chanced to meet on the road to fly before us, alarmed at so unusual a spectacle, and very possibly, when he saw it pursue its sinuous course, like a serpent, towards him, apprehending more than mortal danger in its approach.

“ I remember two instances of terror that occurred to me, when a child, at Sydenham, which I connected

at the moment with the marvellous and supernatural that filled my head whenever I visited that place.

“Young Mr. Tremayne had decorated the walls of an apartment, adjoining the ancient hall, with a print of Fuseli’s ‘Nightmare.’ It represented a horrid demon squatting on the bosom of a beautiful woman asleep upon a bed, and a mare’s head thrusting itself through the curtains.

“To a child the picture was sufficiently frightful of itself: but in addition to this, as, from the dim light burning in the room where I was left alone, I could only see its general outline, and stood gazing on it and thinking of devils and witches, I heard a most ominous noise—stump, stump, on the floor of the hall, in slow and regular succession, with a slight soft step between each stump, without seeing any living being (though the door stood open to the hall) to whom I could attribute such sounds. I was but a mere child, and I dared not venture forth to find out the cause; yet I well remember the chill of superstitious terror that ran through my veins, and the relief it was to my mind when, on communicating the circumstance to my father as a great secret, he dispelled the mystery by telling me that one of the old footmen had a wooden leg, that he was noted for marching with it in a most solemn pace, and that no doubt his parading through an obscure part of the hall must have made itself audible in the apartment where I was viewing Fuseli’s ‘Nightmare’ with fear and wonder.

“On another evening the maids at Sydenham had left me, before putting me to bed, in the large old kitchen by myself. A hound, escaped from the

kennel, ran in, when immediately I heard a loud exclamation of, 'Out, sir, get out; to kennel with you; out, I say!' The dog looked about him, saw no one but myself, a little fellow for whom he felt no fear, and did not stir. But immediately after there commenced, in smart strokes, the smacking of a whip, which so frightened the intruder, that he hung his tail between his legs, and ran howling off. I was now almost as frightened as the dog, well knowing there was nobody but myself in the old kitchen, and yet the sounds came from the lower end of it. I took courage to see what it could be that made the noise, when I found, to my surprise, that an animal of the feathered tribe was thus exercising an assumed power over one of the four-footed creation; for it was no other than a parrot in its cage that had thus commanded the hound to turn out by a most dexterous imitation of word and whip."

These, and many other little circumstances of my husband's childish days connected with Sydenham he has often told me; and I, being very fond of stories and anecdotes, whether they concern adults, old people, or young children, have carefully treasured them up, in what a learned Turk, who spoke broken English, called his 'knowledge-box,' meaning his head.

The family of Tremayne is of ancient standing; their arms, in some measure, form a rebus of their name; they consist of three united arms with clenched hands, and two hands above support a Saracen's head as the crest. I amuse myself with fancying the origin of these bearings must have been that three brothers fought gallantly in the Holy Land, and having overcome, by their united efforts, some

fierce Saracen chief, they brought his head in triumph to Richard of the lion heart. Hence he gave them their arms, and the surname of *Tremayne*, as the three hands that had united to do him such good service in the holy wars. I dare say the present Mr. Tremayne, if he ever sees this letter, will not be a little amused at my finding an origin for his family arms. But the Heralds' College, I have heard, are never at a loss in these matters, when called on to satisfy a doubtful point, so I may plead a very high authority for a trifling exercise of the inventive faculty, or, as Butler says—

“For every why to have a wherefore.”

However, I need not invent either honours or romance for the family of Tremayne; the first are theirs by a long line of brave and loyal ancestry, and are still worthily sustained in the present representative of their house. And for the last there is a real story of twin brothers, in past days, that has in it romance enough for a novel, and proves that Shakspeare did not deal in the improbable when he wrote the *Comedy of Errors*. Indeed I once witnessed an instance of the kind myself, which, had I not seen it, I could scarcely have credited. I remember twin sisters, who used, when I lived in town, for years to sit near me at church, and I could never tell one from the other if I met either alone; nor did their most intimate friends know any difference, so minutely, so exactly did they resemble each other in every point.

The story of the twin Tremaynes is not a whit less wonderful, as I am now about to show, on the authority of Prince.

There is, nearly three miles from Tavistock, a



pretty sequestered village called Lamerton ; of which Mr. Rowe was the rector, and where, it is said in this part of the world (though Johnson says otherwise) his son, the celebrated dramatic poet, was born. A small stream waters this picturesque spot ; many fine old trees, the surrounding hills and valleys, and several thatched cottages, render it altogether a scene of great variety and most pleasing in its character. The old church, too, has that interest which ever accompanies the Gothic and venerable monuments of past days, when the house of prayer was a house of beauty and repose, and the nobles and wealthy of the land thought it an honour to contribute to the building of the church.

In the parish of Lamerton is Collacombe,<sup>3</sup> an old house that for generations was the seat of the Tremaynes (in their origin a Cornish family) before the marriage of Col. Arthur with Bridget Hatherleigh induced them to remove their dwelling to the more splendid mansion of Sydenham. When we visited the church, we were much pleased with viewing the old monument there existing of the family of Tremayne. The figures, in high relief in front of the base, are executed in a very superior style of art, and deserve well to be drawn and engraved, before time shall have destroyed them altogether ; for they have already suffered many injuries ; and the following tale will serve to show how much a feeling of more than ordinary interest connects itself with this old tomb in the little sequestered church of Lamerton. If Rowe might be born here or not, he must often have visited it whilst his father was rector ; and I can fancy his eye and heart must have frequently been

<sup>3</sup> In the hall window of this house are 3545 small panes of glass.

engaged in contemplating the monument ; for a poet could not look on this silent record of the dead, whose lives had been so marked with wonder from the very hour of their birth, and whose mortal career had closed under such melancholy circumstances, without feeling that generous sympathy, that tenderness and pity, the inseparable accompaniments of a poetic mind ; feelings, unless sadly blunted and perverted, that add the charm of pure and natural affections to his verse.

But before I speak of the twin brothers, I must say a few words respecting their father and his family. One of his ancestors, in the reign of Richard II., founded a hospital at the west end of the town of Tavistock, and dedicated it to St. George. Thomas Tremayne, the parent of the celebrated twins, had in all eight sons and as many daughters. Edmund, the second of this numerous issue, became the devoted follower of Edward, Earl of Devon and Marquis of Exeter, and suffered severely by his unshaken attachment to that nobleman during his many troubles. Indeed the fidelity and courage of Edmund were put to a hard trial, which he sustained with noble constancy and resolution ; for the Marquis, having been committed to the Tower, as well as the Princess Elizabeth, on suspicion of being concerned in Wyatt's rebellion, Queen Mary, or her counsellors, thought that young Tremayne must have some knowledge of his master's affairs. They caused him, therefore, to be racked in the Tower of London, in the hope that he would reveal enough to prove the guilt of the Marquis and the Lady Elizabeth. But no tortures could compel him to accuse the innocent, or to betray the confidence of his friend. To the honour of the

maiden Queen be it spoken, she did not forget the fidelity he had evinced under such a cruel test ; for on her accession to the throne, she rewarded Edmund by making him one of the clerks of her Privy Council.

Nicholas and Andrew, sons of the afore-named Thomas Tremayne, were twins ; they were born, as well as Edmund, at Collacombe House, in Lamerton. Prince says of them—"They possessed, from very good testimony, so great a likeness of person and sympathy of affection, as can hardly be paralleled in history." They were of equal height, and exact form, had the same colour hair, and were of such close resemblance in feature and gesture, that they could not be known the one from the other, even by their own parents, brethren, or friends. To distinguish them they would wear a knot of different-coloured ribands, and sometimes, in sport, they would change them and their clothes, which occasioned many playful mistakes, and produced, perhaps, with young men in an hour of frolic, scenes that might have rivalled in their pleasantry those in the comedies of the Roman and English dramatists.

So great, indeed, was the sympathy existing between them, in mind as well as body, that their very affections were the same, for they loved or disliked the same persons and things, followed the same pursuits, were lively or melancholy at the same season, and, more wonderful than all, if one was sick, the other was also, though apart, and without any knowledge of his brother's illness. So much did they love each other that they could not endure to be long separated, and they would eat, drink, sleep, wake, study, or play together, as if they had but one soul animating two bodies.

In the year 1563 these brothers bore arms among the English forces sent into France: the one as a captain of horse, the other as a volunteer. In one of the many engagements near the town of Newhaven, Andrew and Nicholas stood side by side. Throughout their brief military career they had displayed the greatest courage, being ever foremost in the post of honour and of danger. On this day they acted with an energy that was not less exemplary to others than it was hazardous to themselves. At last one of the twins fell; the other instantly took his place, and seemed bent on sharing his beloved brother's fate: no entreaty could induce him to withdraw from so dangerous a station. For some time he maintained it with unabated courage, and at length fell dead on the spot. The monument in Lamerton church is that of their family; most probably their remains were brought home, and there deposited, as the following epitaph on Nicholas and Andrew appears inscribed on a tablet of marble, with several rude rhymes to the memory of the same race:—

“These liken'd twins, in form and fancy one,  
Were like affected, and like habit chose;  
Their valour at Newhaven siege was known,  
Where both encounter'd fiercely with their foes;  
There one of both sore wounded lost his breath,  
And t' other slain, revenging brother's death.”<sup>4</sup>

Before I conclude my letter, I purpose giving you some slight account of another excursion in our neighbourhood that much delighted us. It was to Meavy. The village thus called is situated in a beautiful valley, watered by a stream so clear that every pebble may be seen in its bottom. The church,

<sup>4</sup> Since the above was written it is much to be lamented Lamerton Church has been destroyed by fire.

which has nothing remarkable in it, is of plain architecture: its date, I should think, was not earlier than the beginning of the fifteenth century.

The great curiosity of Meavy is the oak, which stands just without the churchyard; it is a most noble ruin of that king of forest trees. The top is quite bald with 'dry antiquity;' but from the various branches about the centre still sprout leaves of a beautiful bright green, though when we saw them they were somewhat changed and crisped by the touch of autumn. The trunk of this mighty tree is immense in circumference, and so hollow, that it appears to be supported by scarcely anything more than the outward shell connected with the roots. This noble piece of antiquity is still imposing; it looks, indeed, an emblem of sinking majesty, and inspires feelings of veneration and awe, not unmixed with those which arise from reflecting on the vanity of years; since Time, whatever be their strength or their continuance, will at last make them, even as this tree, fall before him. There is no tradition respecting the age of the great Meavy oak; but I doubt not it witnessed the Saxon Heptarchy, if not the Roman Conquest; nor is there anything extravagant in the supposition when we recollect that in the *Survey* of Dartmoor still preserved in the office of the Duchy of Cornwall, and made soon after the Norman Conquest, the oaks in Wistman's Wood are described very much the same as they appear at this day.<sup>5</sup>

Close to the oak stands the broken base of the cross that is usually found before the entrance to a country church. The school-house, as old as the

<sup>5</sup> I am indebted to Archdeacon Froude for this curious piece of information.

days of Edward IV., is a most picturesque building, and stands near the churchyard.<sup>6</sup> There is, too, an ancient overshot mill in the village that would form a sweet picture; and the half of a house (the rest having been lately taken down) that I well remember when it presented the complete form of the letter **E**. It was built in the days of Elizabeth, and was no doubt the manor-house. One remarkable circumstance seemed to distinguish both the village and neighbourhood of Meavy: it is that, excepting one new-built, we did not see a single house, barn, or cottage of a later period than the times of Henry VII. and VIII., and Elizabeth, and many of an earlier date.

The swarm of children in this village, all with cheeks as full, round, and red as an apple, that grouped together on every step of the broken cross, greatly amused us, and we seemed no less to amuse them. They watched our ponies with delight, laughed as they whisked their long tails, pulled each other as we passed by, and pushed a shy little boy forward to bob his head, by way of a bow; and, lastly, they admired our John's new buttons. We left our carriage, John, ponies, and children, about the oak, whilst we walked down to the bridge: it is formed of one high arch that crosses a beautiful river, where we watched the trout playing about for some time, since, such was the perfect purity and clearness of the stream, we could see them as plainly as if they were gold and silver fish in a glass globe of water.

We next inquired our way to Sheeps Tor (or Shittistor, its real name, as I saw it spelt in the old deeds at Mr. Radcliffe's at Warleigh) and being

<sup>6</sup> I hear it is quite altered since we saw it.

directed to follow the road through the village, were told that a mile and a half's walking would bring us to it. We set off, but soon found it was a Scotch mile and a half, with a *bittock*.

The whole of the road was so up-hill, that it was well we had such a succession of beautiful scenery, or I should have been tempted to give way to weariness, and have lain down by the road-side. The pencil, not the pen, must do justice to what we saw; and my alternate complaints at the rough stones, the hill, the labour of the ascent, and exclamations of delight about the scenery, exceedingly amused my fellow-traveller. The land to the left, on the opposite side of the beautifully-wooded valley, with its river winding amidst it, presented the finest forms of bold, intersecting, abrupt hills, each with a granite crown or tor upon its head. Tired as I was, I could not resist pulling out my sketch-book to mark in their general outlines, as a memorandum. The mellow tints of autumn upon the woods, greens, browns (russet, or tawny), produced altogether a rich and varied combination of colour; whilst in some places, the leaves being much fallen, we saw distinctly, yet not nakedly, the ramifications of the trees, their boles often hung with ivy or covered with moss. At length we came to a pretty ancient stone cottage; near it there was an old and upright granite cross, about ten feet high. Here two roads branched off, both leading in the same direction, (only the upper much longer and roundabout than the lower) and unfortunately we took the most toilsome of the two, and so pursued our way up-hill, up-hill, still fagging through a road that was made to bid defiance to all things in this world but a broad-wheeled waggon.

I thought we should never even get in sight of Sheeps Tor, and we talked of giving it up as hopeless, notwithstanding we admitted the scenery around us to be well worthy the trouble we had taken; for we could now command one of the finest views in the whole county of Devon. We saw before us the extensive range of the Dartmoor heights; the lovely vale of Meavy, Roborough Down, and the waters of the Hamoaze forming the middle distance; and we actually looked over Mount Edgcumbe and the Cornish hills, and could see the ocean beyond like a sheet of silver, in one broad glitter, reflecting the sun; whilst the heights in that vicinity, so lofty in themselves, seemed to lie beneath, and, with the upper air, were of one deep ultramarine hue. The effect was sublime; I lost all sense of fatigue as I looked upon it—so much will a strong feeling of the beautiful overcome even the weakness of the body; and I looked till I longed, with Ariel, ‘to sail on the curled cloud’ over such a scene. But cold reality will at last drive away even the raptures of fancy: we had still a long and toilsome road to trudge through; and so, for lack of wings, I was obliged once more to move on my feet, though they ached sadly with the journey.

We hailed with hope a little ugly, modern, white cottage, that now appeared in sight. It was but a short distance from the road, yet I could not summon resolution enough to go out of the way one step to it; but Mr. Bray did, to ask if we were in the right track for Sheeps Tor, and was answered—“Yes, sir, no great ways, only a mile and a half off!” “Oh, my poor feet,” said I; “but courage and *esperanza*, we will go on!” So on we went again; still the same



labour and the same beautiful scene varying at every step before our eyes ; whilst in these elevated regions we breathed an air so pure and keen, that it would have made even the finest lady eat at least half a pound of beef for her dinner ; and I began to feel so hungry, that I regretted I had not had prudence enough to furnish my little basket with something else than a sketch-book.

At length, on a sudden turn round the hill, a scene presented itself which made even me, prepared as I had been by Mr. Bray's account to expect something magnificent, start and exclaim with admiration and wonder. No doubt, also, the glorious effects of the



VALLEY OF SHEEPS TOR.

sky, for it was truly a painter's day, added tenfold beauty to all we saw. There is no describing scenery ; one slight sketch with the pencil is worth a hundred pages of mere description. I again made a rude outline of what was before us : yet I must say something, as my sketch is not sufficiently filled up to be of any

use as an illustration, though it is a memorandum to myself.

Below us lay the valley, through which we still had to pass: it is very close and narrow, and the road abruptly runs up the steep hill beyond, skirted by trees all the way to the little village of Sheeps Tor, decorated with its ancient church. This building, and the village itself, when their situation is compared with the mighty Tor towering above them in the background, look as if they were in a valley; yet the hill to be ascended before they can be reached is truly formidable. This we mastered; and came at length to a small space somewhat level, where a few broad flat stones formed a little bridge over a pretty, clear, and gurgling stream: near this stood some old cottages; and we soon found ourselves in the village. There we vainly endeavoured to procure a guide to what a good woman we talked with called '*Piskie House*,' on the side of Sheeps Tor. The Pixie House is a natural fissure, or narrow cavern amongst the rocks, where Elford the royalist is said to have taken shelter for a considerable time, to avoid the pursuit of Cromwell's troopers. One little boy told me he was afraid to go there; and his mother truly said "That it was a critical place for children." We then went to the church, a pretty Gothic building, in some parts as old, I should think, as the fourteenth century; in others, windows and doors had been introduced, evidently the work of the sixteenth. Over the doorway, well carved in granite, and placed in a little square niche, was a death's head, with ears of corn sprouting out of the holes for the eyes, no doubt in allusion to the passage of St. Paul. Beneath were these words: '*Mors janua vitæ*.' Above, '*Anima*

*resurgat,*' and '*Hora pars vitæ.*' By looking through the church windows, which were very low, we could perfectly well see the interior. A finely carved, painted, and gilt Gothic screen still remains, though much injured by time. There was, too, a Gothic oak pulpit. The school-house stands near the sacred edifice; it is of great antiquity. No creature being in the house, I ventured to open the ponderous, nail-headed oak door, and walked into a little hall. I soon saw all within was quite in its old state, panelling of oak, &c.; but nobody being at home, and fearing I might be taken for a thief if any one suddenly returned, I walked out again, not having half satisfied my curiosity for peeping into such vestiges of past times; and just as I retreated, a low savage growl that met my ears from the interior made me understand that my visit had roused some Cerberus, who very probably would not have given me so civil a welcome as I might fancy one bent on antiquarian pursuits entitled to receive.

I returned to my husband, with whom I had not been able to prevail to join me in trespassing on the school-house, as he stood talking to one of the villagers in the churchyard. We paused for some little while around the graves, reading the few tombstones before we continued our progress.

I never can visit a country churchyard without feelings of so mixed a character, that I should find it difficult to define them; there is so much of pleasure, so much of melancholy, the most refined of all pleasures, in the mood inspired by the scene. The hope of the living, the rest of the dead, then fill the mind: we think of the rite of burial, that noblest service of a liturgy truly sublime; the sorrow of

friends as they surround the grave, and hear those solemn words, 'Ashes to ashes, dust to dust,' which strike with a chill on the mourning heart as the poor remains of all that was once loved better, may be, than life itself, are consigned to the dark and narrow house, where no sound shall strike on the 'dull cold ear of death,' till it comes in that dread peal that proclaims the judgment of the earth.

But why should I attempt to talk about the church and churchyards when there is a passage of unequalled beauty on the subject that I cannot resist giving?

"The peasant, however much his religious education may be neglected, cannot grow up without receiving some of the natural and softening impressions of religion. Sunday is to him a day of rest, not of dissipation; the sabbath bells come to his ear with a sweet and tranquillizing sound; and though he may be inattentive to the service of the Church, and uninstructed in its tenets, still the church and the churchyard are to him sacred places: there is the font in which he was baptized, the altar at which his parents became man and wife, the place where they and their fathers before them have listened to the word of God, the graves wherein they have been laid to rest in the Lord, and where he is one day to be laid beside them. Alas for him who cannot comprehend how these things act upon the human heart!"

We quitted the churchyard and set off on our road, which wound up the hill crowned by the majestic Tor, the Tor itself producing the most beautiful and

<sup>7</sup> *Essays Moral and Political.* Essay the Fourth, 'On the State of the Poor,' &c. Vol. i. p. 112.

striking effect when seen in combination with the church. As we rose, so did this mighty object seem to rise with us, and to grow more and more imposing the nearer we drew to it. For some way up its ascent grass may be seen, springing from a light soil formed of decayed vegetable matter on a substratum of granite. When we reached within a short distance of what might be called the bosom of the Tor, which spread above us in a bold and shelving sweep of about two hundred feet, the granite was totally bare, save where it was here and there covered by its coating of mosses and lichens. It lies tossed about in enormous masses in every possible direction ; now appearing as if piled together mass on mass, tower above tower, whilst vast and innumerable fragments lay on their sides, presenting their acute angles in a manner that brought to mind a petrified sea of breakers. Of these there are thousands and thousands all the way up to the very summit, which is flat or table-formed, and very precipitous towards its southern extremity. On our way up we had inquired at a cottage that stood by the side of the road if we could procure a guide to the Pixie House ; for so many years had elapsed since Mr. Bray visited the spot, that he did not immediately recollect its situation. A young woman who lived at this cottage came out with a fine child in her arms, and very good-naturedly offered to become our guide : she said she had been there once, but she did not think I could reach it, as it was a rough, dangerous place ; and I soon found she spoke the truth.

I never saw a peasant girl, for she scarcely appeared to be twenty years old, with whom I was more struck than with Jane Luscombe, for that was her

name. She wore hobnailed shoes, and nothing could be more homely and poor than the whole of her dress. Every movement of her noble figure was peculiarly graceful. Her head was a study for a painter; the features regular and delicate, with a deep blue eye that was radiant in its expression; and these beauties were rendered of the highest interest by the kind, modest, and good-natured character of her countenance. I would ask no other recommendation for the lovely Jane, as I am certain such a countenance could not deceive: I am sure she is simple, in the best sense of the word, and no less gentle and feeling. Her complexion was tanned a good deal by the sun; but where her neckerchief had slipped aside I saw a throat finely formed, of a dazzling whiteness. I was so delighted with Jane that I almost forgot the Pixie House, as I enjoyed the pleasure, which has ever been to me one of a very high order, that of looking on a beautiful human face.

Jane and I soon became good friends, for I admired her fine baby, as did Mr. Bray, and that was the way to the mother's heart. She told us her husband was a labouring man; that, in the hope to do better, he was about to remove to Plymouth; she was very poor, and the child in her arms was the youngest of three. Thank God, she said, they were healthy and happy, though she could seldom afford to buy meat, and she nursed the baby on milk and water. I shall never forget the good-nature with which she guided us over rocks and stones, all the while carrying the child, that was no light burthen, to find out the Pixie House; yet such were her feelings about the kindness due to the stranger and the traveller, that it was

with extreme difficulty, and not till urged and even entreated by me to do so, that she would take anything from Mr. Bray, as some trifling recompence for the trouble we had given her. Nor must I leave the subject of our fair guide without observing that the very air of Sheeps Tor seems to be friendly to beauty: the women and children in the village, we had before remarked, were very pretty, and had the finest complexions that could be seen; and Mr. Bray told me that when he asked his way at the cottage, where I felt too tired to go with him, a woman came out and spoke to him whose face was truly beautiful. Indeed many of the peasantry of Cornwall and Devon are distinguished by their personal attractions, more perhaps than in any other county of England. I remember one evening when Mr. Bray, my mother, brother, and self were returning from Cothele, a woman, carrying a child and dressed literally in rags, crossed our path; and judge how striking she must have been when we each exclaimed, immediately on seeing her, 'Did you ever see anything so beautiful?'

To return to the Pixie House. Aloft amidst the most confused masses of rock, that looked as if they had been tossed about by the fiends in battle, in a place which seemed (so it appeared to me at least) as if inaccessible to any mortal creature, there was seen a somewhat projecting stone like a pent-house. Beneath was a cleft between two low rocks. This is the entrance to the palace of the Pixies, and the cavern where Elford is said to have found a retreat from persecution. I do not here describe it, having, in the Dartmoor letters, already given you Mr. Bray's account of it. How Elford could live there, how food could be conveyed to him, or how

any living thing but a raven, a crow, or an eagle could make his home in such a spot, is to me, I confess, a puzzle; and had not the paintings on the interior sides of the rocks, executed by Elford, been really seen in these latter days to bear witness to the fact, I should have doubted the tradition altogether.

Thinking that if Elford got up thither (and I knew that Mr. Bray had done so many years before) I too could do the same, I ventured up a few of the rocks; but though I did not fear for my neck, I did for my shins, as the deepest holes, so hidden too by soft moss that they became traps, lay between the masses of granite in the steep and fearful ascent to the Pixie House. What with stepping and jumping from rock to rock, Mr. Bray having, as a sailor would say, taken me in tow, and pulled me over one or two that were of formidable height and difficulty, rising one above the other, in their ponderous masses, like a flight of steps, I certainly got somewhat near the spot that had so much excited my curiosity; nay, having at last been compelled to go on all fours, I crawled over a few rocks more, but was forced to give it up, finding the attempt much too hazardous, and that an accident might be attended with serious consequences. Exhausted and almost worn out, I lay down whilst Mr. Bray continued the attempt; but not being quite so resolute in conquering these kind of difficulties as he was twenty years ago, at last he gave in too; and then came the labour of helping me down again, which he found not a whit less troublesome than pulling me up.

We had now to resume our weary way back again to Meavy; and I never was so tired in all my life as



when we reached the village, though, thanks to Jane Luscombe, our road was shorter in returning than in going, as by her direction we crossed the fields instead of wandering round about them. In our way back we passed a beautiful place; it was a house bearing over the door the date 1610. It is called Knolle, and lies sheltered in a most sequestered and romantic dell. It was altogether a house and scene suited for romance. If Jane had lived there, and been unmarried, she might have become the heroine.

On our return to Meavy we found John, still surrounded by the children, ready to receive us. The ponies had long since eaten their provender, and stood ready harnessed to carry us home. John had been on the look-out and had grown uneasy, fearing we had met with some mischance amongst the rocks. Recollecting, after we were gone, that the basket with our luncheon had that day been forgotten, he had very good-naturedly saved for us the bread and cheese that he had provided for his own refreshment. We did not refuse a share, and to this act of thoughtfulness on his part we were indebted for being rescued from the cravings of hunger. And moreover our John, who is a bit of a naturalist, and as kind and single-hearted a soul as ever breathed, had just seen some rare bird that he wanted to show to 'mistress,' but she came too late for the sight. The good-natured creature and the children had got so well acquainted during our absence, that I heard them ask him to come again soon, and bring the ponies with him. They gave us a shout on leaving the village, and we drove home as fast as the road from Meavy to Roborough Down would let us. Once we had to

pass over so bad a place, and received such a jolt, that we nearly had an upset, to complete the adventures of the day.

Before I conclude this letter I purpose mentioning a melancholy instance of two deaths, by cholera, that occurred in the little village of Sheeps Tor in the summer of 1832, when that fatal disease raged with such violence at Plymouth. The appearance of cholera in this remote village was deemed so extraordinary, as the deceased persons had held no communication with Plymouth (indeed had scarcely stirred from home, and lived with the utmost cleanliness in such a healthy, elevated spot), that the circumstance induced a very particular inquiry, when the following facts were ascertained :—

There lived at Plymouth a man and his wife named N——; they had two children, and pleaded such extreme poverty, that, whenever they chanced to see a friend or relative, they made it a rule to get out of them a sixpence or a shilling as a relief to their alleged necessities. The cholera came upon them like a thief in the night, and N——, his wife, and both the children were in a few hours dead! The brothers of the deceased man now proceeded to the house to give orders for the interment of this fallen family, and to see what effects might be left in their dwelling of supposed poverty. They found fifty or sixty sovereigns, and a bill on a country bank for about seventy pounds! with clothes and other things. You will be shocked to read what next occurred.

Unawed by the fearful spectacle before their eyes, and as if they bore a 'charmed life' that was incapable of sharing the danger so apparent, these two brothers quarrelled about the division of N——'s

property, and actually *fought over the corpse!* The indecent scene of strife alarmed the neighbourhood; the constables were sent for, and the brothers decamped. One, the most violent, possessed himself of some of his *dead brother's clothes*, and fearful of the consequences of having committed a breach of the peace, set off for Sheeps Tor, and took refuge in the cottage of a man and his wife who there kept a little village shop, and to whom he was related. This ruffian, who had fought over the body and brought away the infected clothes, received no injury; but, alas! the poor honest couple who sheltered him caught the fatal disease, died, and were buried in the churchyard close to which they lived. On the morning of the wife's death, only the day after her husband, a poor orphan boy, I am told, came into Tavistock to say to the doctor, "that father and mother both were gone, and he had been left alone with the dead!"

## LETTER XXXIV.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

The Ancient Charities of Tavistock—Hospital of St. George founded and endowed *temp.* Edward III.—Hospital of the Lazar House of St. Mary Magdalen and St. Theobald, called the Maudlin—St. John's Chapel—Mr. Lewknor, the Vicar of Tavistock, spared in the times of Charles I.—Serjeant Glanville's Charity—Sir William Courtenay's Bequest—The Gift-houses—The Public Library—Institution—Lectures—Museum—New Librarian in place of the deceased Mr. Knight—Remarkable circumstance respecting Mr. Knight—Thomas Henwood—His courage and promptitude—Mary Colling, a Note of her and her Book.

*Vicarage, Tavistock, June 8th, 1833.*

THIS will be a letter of a very miscellaneous character; as I propose, like the ingenious Spaniard Espriella, to notice even the least thing that is worthy of observation.

Had Espriella visited this town he would have found subjects for many a letter, and would have told his correspondent that the English charity he so much commends was in no place more largely displayed, the size of the town being considered, than in Tavistock. Some of these public examples of charity he would, too, joyfully have traced to their Catholic origin, and would have lamented that others founded in those days when the blessed Mary and the blessed St. Rumon here held sway were now forgotten, or commuted for something else deemed no doubt better by those who managed the commutation.

It appears from the manuscript account of the ancient charities of this parish, entrusted to my hands by Mr. Charles Crapp, that the 'abstracts' which it contains were "taken out of y<sup>e</sup> new Feoffm<sup>t</sup> Deeds on August 21<sup>st</sup>, 1738." The document is now before me; but did I copy the whole verbatim it would be tiresome, as the repetitions of law terms with which it abounds are about as amusing as the reading of a title-deed or a conveyance at the present time. It will therefore be sufficient to notice only a few in general terms, excepting in two or three particulars.

I have before slightly alluded to the hospital founded and endowed by one of the ancient house of Tremayne, and dedicated to St. George in the reign of Edward III. Of the extinction of that charity I know nothing, nor have I been able to learn any particulars concerning it. In the MS. there is a notice of the Hospital or Lazar House of St. Mary Magdalen and St. Theobald, commonly called the Maudlin. This house survived the destruction of the Abbey; and in the twenty-seventh of Elizabeth, John Butte, then prior, and the brothers and sisters of the same house, with one consent, by deed indented under seal, demised to John Fitz, Esq. and others, in trust, as dispensators of the same for the benefit of the poor lazars, or, wanting such, the poor, all the said lands, tenements, orchards, and parks, for the space of one thousand years. The Maudlin Chapel, of which not even a fragment now exists, was in use so late as the year 1672: this we learn from an entry in the churchwarden's account, which runs thus—"October 20th, 1672, then collected at the Maudlin Chappell, towards the reliefe of John Bazely, blacksmith, inhabitant in the saide towne

of Tavistocke, the sum of thirty shillings and sixpence.”<sup>1</sup>

After the charity of the Maudlin or Lazars comes a long entry about tolls, fairs, markets, market-house, court of pypowder, &c., originally granted by letters patent, under the great seal of Edward VI., to the Earl of Bedford in 1551. By this it appears that the ‘fairs’ (tolls of them) were, so late as in 1738, “applied to y<sup>e</sup> schoolmaster, being at y<sup>e</sup> discretion of y<sup>e</sup> lessees.”

Mr. Lewknor, being in the time of Charles I. the Vicar of Tavistock, and then pronounced and returned ‘a preaching minister,’ no doubt found favour with the Parliament party, and was not disturbed in his vicarage. Possibly his patron, the Earl of Bedford, who was opposed to the Royalists, might have been a friend to him at this crisis; since the clergy were so persecuted on the most trivial or groundless charges, that Walker, who drew up his account from authentic documents, gives a statement respecting a loyal member of the Church who was ejected in Devonshire on pretences of so frivolous a

<sup>1</sup> St. John's Chapel, as I have before mentioned, was a hermitage on the south side of the Tavy. Amongst the parish documents there is preserved a petition to the then Earl of Bedford (which my brother thinks may be dated about 1677) praying—“That as there is a little cottage much ruyned, with two little garden-plots to the same belonging, called by the name of St. John's Chappell, bought in the time of the late contagious sickness, and then converted to a pest-house,” that his lordship would be pleased to grant it to the parish for ninety-nine years, determinable on three lives thereunder named, reserving to his lordship the ancient rent of one shilling yearly, to be “converted to the use of the poor of the saide parish, unless it should be again required as a pest-house.” And this was granted.

St. Margaret's was a small chapelry dependent on the Abbey, which Mr. Bray thinks stood near Mount Tavy, and that it was used as a place of worship by the people of the hamlet of Cudlipptown.

nature, that one amongst the other charges brought against him was—that he ate custard pudding in a slovenly and unseemly manner for a minister.

The next charity recorded is that of Sir John Glanville, to put “a poor, but towardly boy, born of honest parents in Tavistocke, to college.” As I have already mentioned this in the life of Glanville, I here omit the detail concerning it found in the MS.

The last record (and the document breaks off abruptly, as if not finished, leaving also many blank pages at the close) is that of a grant of certain yearly rents ‘to be goeing out of Pitscliffe,’ made on the 14th of May, 29th of Charles II., by Sir William Courtenay, to ‘y<sup>e</sup> use of y<sup>e</sup> poore of Tavistocke,’<sup>2</sup> and this is, I apprehend, the same charity as that called the ‘Courtenay alms-house,’ mentioned in the *Gentleman’s Magazine*, as “one of the ancient and noble family of Courtenay gave £4 per annum, to be divided, by way of pension, among four poor widows in an hospital or almshouse of Tavistock. This building was repaired by George Courtenay, Esq., of Walreddon, at the beginning of the eighteenth century. It is now an almshouse, called the Gift-house for poor women, but not confined to widows.

The Dispensary lately established for relieving the sick was originally suggested by Mr. Charles Crapp; both medicine and attendance are given gratis, on the recommendation of a subscriber.

The next institution I have to speak of here is not one of charity, nor of old times, but one of universal benefit: it is the Public Library, of which the four founders deserve an honourable mention. These are

<sup>2</sup> No doubt this was the Sir William Courtenay, to whom Lady Howard bequeathed Walreddon and Fitzford.

(I copy their names as they stand in the record now before me) the Rev. E. A. Bray, Mr. John Commins, Mr. John Taylor, and the Rev. W. Evans, of Park Wood. These gentlemen founded the Public Library amongst themselves in the year 1799. They soon entertained hopes of widely extending their plan, and the Duke of Bedford became the patron of this most useful institution. Numerous subscribers in a short space gave in their names, and a subscription was next proposed for the erection of a library to contain the books, which had greatly increased in number. A sum of 1000*l.* was, I believe, speedily raised, of which 100*l.* was generously given by John Rundle, Esq., the banker.<sup>3</sup>

Finally a portion of the Abbey, above the archway that once formed the principal entrance, was fitted up by the Duke of Bedford to receive the books, and thither they were placed. The library is supported by yearly subscriptions, and a librarian receives a regular salary from the sums thus collected.

About five years ago an institution was founded here for the purpose of giving lectures on any subjects connected with art, science, or literature—religion and politics being alone excluded, in order to prevent any disputes amongst the members of the society. Mr. Bray recommended that, as this neighbourhood is so rich in minerals, the society should add to their institution a Museum of native specimens of every kind. These could be easily collected at a small expense; and geological specimens, from Dartmoor and elsewhere, would likewise be useful and appropriate in

<sup>3</sup> The gentleman here named was one of the members for Tavistock. In all matters of public or private charity he was a most liberal benefactor to his native town.



such a selection. A herbal also might be formed, and this would stimulate young people to the pursuit of botany; since it is universally admitted that no county in England is more fertile than Devonshire in the variety and richness of its plants<sup>4</sup>.

Some new regulations have lately been introduced at our institutions, and a new librarian appointed in the place of Mr. Knight, recently deceased. I cannot here resist the opportunity afforded of mentioning a very remarkable circumstance connected with Mr. Knight.

You recollect the story I related of George Philp, in Mary's book, who was lost, together with his young son, in the *Vestal*, off the coast of Newfoundland. Lieut. Edgcumbe<sup>5</sup> was on board the ship; and Mr. Knight, then a boy, being related to Edgcumbe, was persuaded by him to go to sea in the next voyage he was to make with his captain. Young Knight consented, and set off to join the *Vestal* at Plymouth at the appointed time. A trifling circumstance delayed him on the road, so that on his arrival he found himself too late; for the *Vestal* had weighed anchor, and he caught sight of her, under a favouring gale, far out at sea, making her way rapidly through the waves. To join her proved impossible, for though he made the effort, the boat into which he immediately leaped could not reach the ship; he was therefore obliged to put back. On landing, greatly disappointed in all his plans, young Knight found an old seaman standing alone on the beach, and still attentively observing

<sup>4</sup> A museum was formed subsequent to this letter being written.

<sup>5</sup> Of the ancient family of Edgcumbe, who for more than seven hundred years have held certain lands near Milton Abbot, where the old mansion stands to this day.

the diminishing vessel, as she continued her course through the distant waters. "That ship will never return," said the old sailor, "she is overmasted." His prediction was, indeed, fulfilled; for the *Vestal* sunk in one of those sudden squalls so frequently met with on the banks of Newfoundland. Mr. Knight, when he related his narrow escape from joining a crew, every one of whom met with a watery grave, acknowledged in the most feeling manner the merciful intervention of Providence in his preservation. He recollected very well seeing poor George Philp and his high-minded wife pass under the Church Bow on the morning of their fatal parting. He remembered the peculiar expression of Mrs. Philp's countenance; not a tear was in her eye, she was perfectly composed, but she looked as if her heart was dead within her. She was, he added, a most remarkable woman: one so resolute or so patient in hard fortune he had never seen.

Mr. Knight, who died last year, was universally respected, and, as librarian, a loss to the town.

Amongst the remarkable characters in this town deserving particular notice is Thomas Henwood, a youth whose promptitude and intrepidity in saving the life of a fellow-creature merit the highest praise, and have been rewarded by a silver medal from the Humane Society of London, and, above all, by that self-satisfaction which the remembrance of the circumstance must afford him to the last hour of his existence. Thomas Henwood, the son of poor but respectable parents, was about fifteen years old when the event I have to detail occurred. He was a lad of a quiet disposition, modest in his address, and always steady and industrious in his calling.

On Tuesday, Oct. 31, 1826, a child of three years old, the son of Mr. Long, of the town mills, whilst at play near the leat, fell into the stream. Providentially the mills were not working at the time. The child floated down the narrow channel towards another fulling-mill, but passed out at the sluice, and by the force of the current was carried across the river Tavy, towards the second arch of the Abbey, or Guile Bridge. The river was high in consequence of late rains. The body was rapidly approaching; had it passed under the arch all would have been over, since only a few yards beyond it there is a weir, or fall of water, partly over rocks, where no human means could have rescued the infant. At this fearful crisis, when nothing of the child could be seen but one of its little arms raised above the water, young Henwood, aware of the perilous condition of the infant, and that the moment it passed under the arch all chance to save it would be over, without the pause of a moment, instantly leaped the parapet, and from the embankment plunged into the river. The waters reached above his shoulders: he struggled with them in extreme peril of his own life, but, supported by the generous impulse of humanity, he felt no fear. Notwithstanding, therefore, the incumbrance of his clothes, he was enabled to swim to the deep part of the river near the arch; and amidst the cheerings and greetings of the crowd, which had by this time collected on the banks, he caught a firm hold of the poor child, and with a presence of mind, in such a situation truly admirable, brought it towards an accessible part of the river, in a position to preserve its powers of respiration; and thus soon afterwards had the satisfaction of delivering the boy to his friends, unharmed.

A narrative of the circumstances was drawn up, and signed by some of the most respectable inhabitants of Tavistock, who witnessed the intrepidity of Henwood. Mr. Bray, the portreeve, and many others, joined in recommending him to the notice of the Humane Society, and he was sent for by the committee, that he might be present at the next anniversary. Henwood received the silver medal, I believe from the hand of the Duke of Sussex. On his return, he brought us his medal to look at; we were much interested with the modesty of his manners, and the feeling way in which he alluded to the preservation of the poor little boy.

Having in my former letters<sup>6</sup> presented you with so full an account of Mary Maria Colling, I do not here give any detailed sketch of her remarkable story, though she certainly claims a prominent place in the biography of Tavistock. She is the same modest, single-hearted creature that she was before she had the good fortune to be the object of so much kindness and notice, both from yourself and other generous friends who felt interested in her little story, and the unassisted efforts she had made to form and cultivate her mind.

Since the publication of her volume, she has devoted as much time as the duties of her service would admit to her improvement; and I rejoice to tell those who fancied I might do her an injury instead of a benefit by bringing her forward, that the success of her book, (and for one in her station of life it was considerable) and the notice it procured for her from so many

<sup>6</sup> Annexed to a little volume of *Fables, and other Pieces in Verse*. By Mary Maria Colling. For an interesting account of Mary's volume, see the 92nd number of the *Quarterly Review*, March, 1832.

honourable quarters, have done her no harm whatever ; but, I trust, much good. There cannot be a more affectionate, or humble mind, or a more perfectly natural and engaging character.<sup>7</sup>

I remember you wished to know how she taught her canary-bird to talk. I have questioned her on the subject ; but I conclude the talking canary must have been a genius, as the same pains she took with him she has lately bestowed on the successor of his cage, but without the same success. She tells me that the deceased bird was a great favourite, and she, being much alone, used to have him near her whilst engaged in her work. That she would talk to him, and give him bits of bread, sugar, or cake, which he always took very kindly, and would put his bill between the wires, and seem attentive to her. She generally addressed it with the words 'Pretty Dick Canary,' or 'Pretty little dear, give us a bit,' &c. One day, after she had thus been fondling it, she left the kitchen, and on her return, whilst engaged in work, she distinctly heard the words—'Pretty little dear.' Knowing that no person but herself was in the kitchen, she looked round with astonishment, and the canary again distinctly repeated the same words. She mentioned the circumstance to her master, Mr. Hughes, who said it must be fancy ; but he was convinced, by himself hearing the bird speak, that she had stated a fact ; and Dick's talents for talking were soon celebrated amongst Mary's acquaintance and friends. So great was her care of the bird after this discovery, that she used to carry it up at night, and hang the cage not very far from the bed. I have no doubt her care killed the poor canary ; for it did not

<sup>7</sup> Mary Colling died a few years after this was written.

long survive her extreme attention to its comforts. I have somewhere read that the human breath, in a confined atmosphere, will very quickly destroy birds, and Mary's canary may be cited, perhaps, as an example.

## LETTER XXXV.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

Old Survey of the Town in 1726—Tavistock a Borough Town—Court Leet and Court Baron—Court of Record—Manor of Tavistock—Burgesses—Markets—Ancient Guildhall; still the Court of Justice—Remarkable Feud between the Towns of Tavistock and Okehampton—Death of Carter Foote—Healthy state of the Town—Longevity of the People—Rejoicing on the passing the Reform Bill—Procession—Population—Yearly Deaths—The Doctors—The Plague of 1626—Assizes removed from Exeter to Tavistock in 1591 on account of the Plague—The Cholera here in 1832—Humble Life—Accidents in Mines—Affecting story of a Widow and her Son.

*Vicarage, Tavistock, June 21st, 1833.*

I HAVE this morning been looking over some notes made from "A Survey and Valuation of the Site of the Abbey of Tavistock, together with the Demesnes and Manor of Hurdwick, in the county of Devon, belonging to the most noble Wriothesley, Duke of Bedford," taken by Humphrey Smith, in 1726.

I find in this few particulars of any import which I have not already noticed, excepting some brief items that ought not to be omitted, as they form a portion of the history of the town, in its minor details.

"Tavistock," this document states, "is a Borough by prescription, and of great antiquity. It consists of a portreeve and about one hundred and ten free-

holders.<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Bedford's steward holds a Court Leet and Court Baron twice a-year ; viz. Michaelmas and Lady-day.

"At the first court the jury returns four persons, out of which the steward nominates one for portreeve, and swears him in for the year. The members of Parliament are elected by the majority of the freeholders, and returned by the portreeve. The weekly market on Fridays is considerable. Five fairs are held during the year.

"The manor of Tavistock was most likely held by Orgar, who kept his court here till the Abbey was erected ; for we find by a charter of King Henry I., recited by *inspeximus*, in a charter of confirmation made 21st Edward III., that the king granted to the Abbey the Jurisdiction and Hundred of Tavistock, with market, fairs, &c., with the view of frankpledge, gallows, pillory, assize of bread and beer, &c. All which privileges were challenged by the abbot in the reign of Edward I., and enjoyed by his successors till the dissolution of monasteries in 1539.

"The portreeve has possessed the privilege of being returning officer of the burgesses elected to serve in Parliament ; for we find they made three returns in King Edward I. and King Edward II.'s reigns ; and have constantly sent their representatives ever since the beginning of King Edward III.'s time. The list of the burgesses who have served in Parliament for this borough, begins the 23d of Edward I. ; but is

<sup>1</sup> This was in 1726. The following statement I have been favoured with from our present Portreeve :—Number of voters (resident) before the passing of the Reform Bill, 31 ; ditto minors, 2 ; non-resident freeholders, and thereby disqualified before the passing of the Bill, but admitted by it, 8 ; non-resident, living at a greater distance than seven miles, 9. Number of votes under the Reform Act, 246.



continued for no more than two other elections, till the beginning of King Edward III.'s reign, whence it is carried on entire (except in the four reigns before mentioned, when the rolls are lost) to the 12th of her late Majesty Queen Anne. The members of Parliament for this corporation now serving [in 1726] are

“Sir John Cope, jun., Bart.

“Francis Henry Drake, Esq.”

That this town was formerly of far greater note than at present cannot be doubted; the various historical records of its importance heretofore mentioned are sufficient proof of the fact. Tavistock is still considered to possess one of the finest markets in the West of England for corn; and the woollen manufacture is still carried on; but not with that success, nor with that superiority in the article produced, when the ‘Tavistock kersey’ sold in London was sure to procure the highest prices, and to be held unrivalled in the excellence of its manufacture. Indeed only the most common serges are now made here. And as to the market, though abundant in poultry and butter, it is by no means a cheap one. However, it is very large and crowded every Friday throughout the year.

The Guildhall, mentioned in the *Survey* above quoted, is still the court of justice. Mr. Bray performed the duties of a magistrate there for nearly twenty years. There is a good deal of business here for the magistrates, and formerly there must have been even more, since Mr. Bray's father could recollect barristers pleading in the Guildhall of Tavistock as in a court of assize.

Amongst other remarkable circumstances respecting this town is the extraordinary feud, still the

theme of tradition, which for years existed between the Tavistock and the Okehampton people. How the feud commenced I do not know: if it is to be traced back to the times when some Norman baron was lord of the latter place, and lived with his retainers perched on the top of a high hill in the strong castle there situated, of which nothing but a heap of picturesque ruins now remains; if the monks of our Abbey had any share in this quarrel; if they excommunicated the baron, or armed their yeomanry and tenantry against him; are all matters for amusing conjecture, and will do, as well as any other cause to fancy as the beginning of so lasting and deadly a feud between two neighbouring towns. Or possibly the wars of the Red and White Roses (and hot wars were they in the West) might have occasioned it; or even a less matter—rivalry in trade, or, in more modern times, rivalry of Whig and Tory principles; since, with some individual exceptions, Tavistock is noted for espousing the former, and Okehampton the latter in politics. Let the cause of hatred, however, be what it may, certain it is the two towns have hated each other with hearty good will from generation to generation; and as one proof of the fact, take the following story, for the truth of which I have many respectable living authorities.

There was some years ago a character of this borough, in humble life, whose name was Carter Foote. On returning from Okehampton, whither he had journeyed on business, he remounted his horse, after having enjoyed himself at the public-house, and attempted to pass the river below the bridge, by fording. The day had been stormy, and one of those sudden swells of the river, that sometimes

happen in hilly countries where the currents rush rapidly from the moors, taking place, he found himself in extreme danger. After long endeavouring to struggle with the current, he leapt from his horse upon a rock, which still kept its head above water; and there the unfortunate man stood calling aloud for help, though his cries were scarcely audible, from the roaring of the wind and the water.

Some person going by ran and procured a rope, which he endeavoured to throw towards the rock; but finding it impossible to do so without further assistance, he begged two men belonging to Okehampton, who drew near the spot, to give him help and save the stranger whose life was in so much peril. One of them, however, very leisurely looked at the sufferer, and only saying 'Tis a Tav'stock man, let un go,' walked off with his companion, and poor Carter Foote was drowned.

Our town is considered, and justly so, remarkably healthy; it has abundance of water, and the wind which sweeps across the valley affords a constant change of air, whilst the river is rapid, and there are no stagnant pools. The parish register proves that the inhabitants live to be very old; many die beyond eighty, some beyond ninety. On looking over that record yesterday, I saw an entry of the burial of Elizabeth Gendal, who died very lately at the age of one hundred and two. Last year this poor woman with another, whose name is Jones, and who is nearly one hundred years old, sat together at tea in the open streets, when there was a grand rejoicing for the passing of the Reform Bill; an event which was here celebrated by feasting and a procession.

I mentioned just now that Tavistock was a healthy

place ; but I did not therefore mean to say that people never fell sick, or never died in it. For however good the air may be, or however great our advantages, sickness and death will come in various shapes among us, to claim their dues of poor mortality here the same as everywhere else. Yet considering that, according to the last census, we have in this parish a population of 5602,<sup>2</sup> about one hundred deaths yearly are not many. If the doctors could keep off sickness, we have here no lack of them ; and as they one and all tendered their services with no other reward than the good deed will afford them, to administer their help to the poor, when the Dispensary in this town was lately established, they deserve a most honourable mention, and that I feel a pleasure in giving them. Indeed a country doctor, the most laborious and the greatest slave of the public, is one of its most useful and meritorious servants.

By inquiring amongst our medical men, I find that disorders of an inflammatory nature are the most common in this town and neighbourhood. Inflammations of the lungs, typhus fever, rheumatism, and that deadly foe to children, the croup, sometimes occur. There is, too, in Devonshire, a dangerous cholic, probably the consequence of drinking cider when heated with exercise.

I have before mentioned the ravages the plague made in this place in the year 1626, when the market was held amongst the Druidical circles on Dartmoor. We have still a tradition current here, that during the time the pestilence raged, the town was so deserted, that the grass grew between the stones in the streets. It is also said that a very malignant

<sup>2</sup> The population has greatly increased since this was written.

fever visited Tavistock about a century ago, when the market was again removed to Hurdwick. In the year 1591, whilst the plague swept off the inhabitants of Exeter in such awful numbers, the summer assizes of that city were removed to our town ; and thirteen persons, convicted of capital crimes, were executed on the Abbey green.

I have in these letters more than once followed your advice in collecting such short and simple annals of the poor as I could find here of any interest. In doing this how often have I thought that in humble life, especially in the country, how much, in the most aggravated trials of sickness, poverty, and suffering, there may be found of patience, of a quiet submission to the Divine will, that if witnessed in those known to the world would be celebrated as heroic examples of piety and virtue. "Few," says an eminent French writer, "can discover superior merit, either of talent or of virtue, unless it is pointed out to them by some one who possesses the power as well as the will to bring it into notice ; but all will pay to both the most striking homage when consecrated by the voice of public fame."

This is true ; and examples of private worth are not less useful than those of the most public character, even when found amongst the poorest of the poor. It is a pleasing as well as a desirable task to give them a record ; notwithstanding that record may itself become neglected : some solitary eye may glance on it, some heart which repines in secret under similar trials and difficulties may be encouraged by seeing how much of consolation may be found in bearing with a Christian's hope and resignation those strokes of fortune that are more or less the lot of all, though

it is true many seem to have more than their share of 'the ills that flesh is heir to.'

In this neighbourhood accidents frequently occur in the mines: some are of a nature too appalling for repetition. One, which I cannot even now recollect without shuddering, will find its way to every heart, so deeply was the sufferer an object of general commiseration.

There is in this town a poor widow, who has several children, and earns her bread in daily labours. Her eldest son I well remember; he was a fair-headed, fresh-coloured youth, of a pleasing countenance; very fond of his mother, quiet and harmless, but considered rather weak in his intellect; and perhaps on this account he was her favourite child. The widow had taken great pains to rear him, and was so tender over him, that when I saw her with the poor lad, I used to think of a line by the unfortunate Neale—

"The bird that we nurse is the bird that we love."

She was very poor, and at last succeeded in getting some work for her son in the mines that he was equal to undertaking. I saw him with her not long after, when she one day brought him to our house, in the pride of her heart, to tell me that her "dear boy was like a man now, for he could honestly get his own bread," and she repeated with a mother's fondness the proofs of his good conduct, how regular he was in his hours of returning home, and that not a penny was idly spent. "She blessed God for him as a comfort to her, and the bits of children she had to bring up."

For some time I saw no more of her, till one day I was in the kitchen giving some orders to the servants. The door was open—in rushed the poor widow,

without any previous intimation of her being near the house—she threw herself into an old oak chair that stood by the fire, clasped her hands together, and with a countenance pale as death, and wild in its expression, exclaimed in a frantic manner, “He is killed, killed, my boy, my poor son! God have mercy on me, I have lived to see him brought home a corpse—my boy, my dear boy!”

Shocked at the intelligence, and alarmed for the poor mother, I stood for a moment unable to speak to her. When I did so, and endeavoured to learn some connected account, for all attempts to soothe her feelings must have been ineffectual at such a moment, she was in so distracted a state that I could learn nothing more than that the lad was killed in the mines, and had been brought home a corpse to her door. It appeared, however, as I afterwards heard, that her son had quitted her that morning to go to his work: he parted from her with a kiss, and said, ‘Mother, God bless you.’ I could not repeat the horrid particulars of the accident by which he met his death: he was entangled in one of the wheels of the machinery in the mine; need more to be said to intimate his dreadful fate? Happily he did not linger; he was instantly disengaged by the exertion of his fellow-labourers, but he was quite dead; and without giving his poor mother any notice, they carried home the body to her door.

Another incident connected with her melancholy tale must not remain unnoticed. The poor, the very poor, deeply as they feel, have not leisure to give their days exclusively to grief. The widow had other children, and for them she was obliged to do many little things even whilst the poor lad lay a corpse.

She came again to our house ; her manner was less frantic, but her expressions of sorrow were still wild and energetic. She was in tears ; and she sobbed so much at first that she could scarcely tell me what new grief had added fresh bitterness to her heart-rending loss. "Something," she said, "had hurt her so—she could not have believed it possible that anybody could have been so wicked, so cruel to one like her ; a widow woman with her small children, and her dear boy just killed ; it was cruel—it was so unfeeling." It was, indeed ; for the poor creature told me that she had "washed out her own apron and her little children's frocks, that they might all be decent, and have on them a bit of black riband for poor"—she stopped, for she could not speak his name, her sobs would not let her. She continued—"For *his* funeral ; and she hung them near her door, and somebody had stolen part of them, and carried them off."

I do not know if the mingled expression of her grief for the loss of her son, and her sense of such a want of feeling in the person, whoever he might be, that had done her the little injury she sustained at such an hour, was not even more painful to witness than her first frantic burst of sorrow ; yet she never forgot the hope of a Christian. How many talk of resignation ; but how few practise it like this poor creature.



## LETTER XXXVI.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

The Writer states the Claims of One near to her, to hold a Place in the Biography of Tavistock—Proposes to give a Sketch that may be amusing, and of some interest, she hopes, concerning him—Born in Tavistock—His Father of the Legal Profession—His Mother determines her Son shall be named after Sir Edward Atkyns—Some account of the Atkynses—Celebrated Men in their day—Buried in Westminster Abbey—Christening of little Edward Atkyns Bray—His Godfathers—A Sketch of the Brigadier—Anecdotes of Childhood—Early Talent for Drawing—Edward's inclination for the Church—Difficulty about his going to School—Anecdotes about early days—The Lad discovers a taste for Poetry—Mr. Tasker, the Physiognomist, prophesies about him on observing his Countenance at their first Meeting—Edward's Godfather, Mr. Tremayne, His Father's determination to make him a Lawyer—Edward at last sent to School at Moreton Hampstead—Some account of the Rector and his Curate—Origin of the familiar expression of *Sore*, used by the Moreton Cooks—Baldwin Fulford—Traditionary Story of Richard I. in the Holy Land—Story of a Knight and Lady—Edward goes to Fulford—Melancholy Circumstance relating to Sir John Collyton when a Child—William Dacres Adam, another Schoolfellow—Oddities amongst the Characters of Moreton—The Doctor a Votary of Hoyle and Galen—Red Post Fynes and the Punchbowl Tree—Little Edward's Shyness not cured—Mr. Cake, his Master, removes to Alphington—Remarkable character of the Master of the rival School—His History—The late Lord Gifford one of his Pupils—Halloran's Fate—Edward emancipated from School—Publishes a Volume of Poems in his Eighteenth Year—Commended by the Critics—Edward forms a Plan to write a History of his native Town—Begins his Excursions—He pursues also Drawing and Music—Studies the Modern Languages—Becomes well versed in Italian Literature—Forms an intimacy with some of the French Officers, Prisoners on Parole—His admiration of Gesner—Edward becomes Captain-Lieutenant in the Corps of the Royal Devon Miners—The King signs his Commission—Edward meets

the Duke of Clarence—The Royal Devon Miners turned into an Artillery Corps—Edward their Captain Commandant—Anecdote of Doctor Hunt—In 1801 Edward enters as a Student at the Middle Temple—At his Leisure follows his Pursuits—Writes Poetry in Italian—Studies the Works of Bacon—Becomes acquainted with Dr. Shaw and several eminent Persons—With Matthias; an Intimacy follows—Meets Sheridan and many celebrated Persons—Has an Interview with Walking Stuart—The Philosopher's Person, Opinions, &c.—Browne, the Traveller—Lady Hamilton—Anecdotes of Horne Tooke—Friends in London; fashionable Society—Edward's Studies, Pursuits, and Amusements—His *Vers de Société*—Selections from them—Sir Sydney Smith; Anecdotes of himself whilst a Prisoner in the Temple at Paris—Edward goes the Circuit for Five Years—His acquaintance with Sir Charles Manners Sutton—Anecdotes of Edward related by his Bar Friends—Three Cases—His Inclinations turned on the Church—Attends the Lectures of Dr. Porteus—Meets Mr. Mathias and communicates his Plan—Circumstances attending his Ordination—Goes to Tavistock—The Duke of Bedford makes him Vicar of that Town—Keeps a Journal of his Excursions in the Neighbourhood—When Rural Dean, makes Drawings of all the Churches—His clerical Career, Studies, and Pursuits—List of his published Works—Takes his Degree as Bachelor of Divinity at Trinity College, Cambridge—Acts as a Magistrate at Tavistock—His Hymns; a Selection from them.

*Vicarage, Tavistock, September 12th, 1833.*

HAVING mentioned, from Orgar and Elfrida, Drake and Browne, down to Mary Colling, all those personages who may be said to deserve a place in the Biography of Tavistock, I have now but one other to name; and to him I am largely indebted for the information he has afforded me in the progress of these letters. Need I add that it is of my husband I would speak? His researches in this neighbourhood; his writings, both published and in manuscript; his various pursuits; and his labours for more than twenty years, for the pulpit of our church, would *alone* entitle him to hold no mean station in the Biography of Devon. But when to these claims are added his discoveries, *and his were the first*, on the

western limits of Dartmoor, connected as they are with the earliest periods of British history, it would not only be doing injustice to himself, but to his native place, did I omit him. I feel, nevertheless, that the mention of Mr. Bray, under the head of Biography, is a delicate task for me to execute, so as to speak the truth, and yet avoid egotism ; since to write of one so nearly and dearly connected is very much like writing about one's self. I shall not sit down, therefore, to indite a regular life of him. I shall merely give you some slight account of his original destination, his change of profession, and the motives which induced it, from the bar to the Church ; his pursuits, &c., in brief succession. And here and there I shall add some few anecdotes respecting certain characters with whom he was brought in contact, which, as they amused me when I heard them related, may possibly afford some little entertainment to you : if so, my end will be answered ; and I am fully aware, from my own experience, that you have too much good nature to frown at trifles when they are harmless, or introduced with a wish to please.

My husband was born in the Abbey House at Tavistock. He was the only son, though not the only child, for he has a sister younger than himself, of the late Edward Bray, Esq., who from an early period of life till the time of his death, in 1816 (he was of the legal profession), was employed in the management of the property of his Grace the Duke of Bedford in this part of England. Mr. Bray married Mary, widow of Arthur Turner, Esq.,<sup>1</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> His daughter (by this first marriage) Dionysia, inherited the whole of Mr. Turner's large fortune ; and married her cousin, Henry Brandreth, Esq., of Houghton House, Bedfordshire.

daughter of Doctor Brandreth, of Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire, a physician of eminence in his day; and not unknown as having for many years enjoyed an intimate acquaintance with many distinguished persons of that age, who frequently assembled round his table. Of these and of her ancestry (of which she was not a little proud, usually asserting that they were related to many of the most ancient and noble families in England) Mrs. Bray used to tell several amusing anecdotes with great vivacity. She died about four years ago, at the age of eighty-eight, greatly respected and regretted.

It was Mrs. Bray who determined that her son should be named after the family of Atkyns, a branch of her own ancestry, who were remarkable for having a father and his two sons all judges in the times of the Charleses. All three were buried in Westminster Abbey, where their monument still exists; and the portrait of one of them still hangs in Guildhall; he, I believe, having obtained that honourable distinction in consequence of his being one of the commissioners for the allotment of the ground to the several claimants after the fire of London.

The portrait of Sir Robert Atkyns, son of Sir Edward, hangs in the library of our house, and bears so strong a resemblance to my husband, that if he were decorated with the same legal robes, wore his hair in the same fashion, and was as young as Sir Robert at the time he sat to the artist, it might pass for his picture, and would be commended for its fidelity both of feature and expression. This portrait was, by the Brandreth family, usually considered a Vandyke. It is certainly a very beautifully painted

picture ; but truth obliges me to lessen its value by positively asserting that it is no Vandyke, but a production from the pencil of Dahl, who lived in the reign of Charles II., and who, though he left but few works, did enough to establish his reputation as an artist of more than ordinary merit, of which indeed this portrait alone is sufficient proof. One of the Atkynses was the author of the celebrated *County History of Gloucester*, and a man of the most extensive learning and acquirements. My husband, on once visiting Gloucester Cathedral, happened to mention that he was a descendant of the historian, and was treated with the greatest respect on that account.

Little Edward Atkyns received his name at a christening accompanied with all the liberal hospitality of those days, when christenings were great events in the family history. Godfathers and godmothers were generally then chosen with a view to some future benefit to the new-made Christian, and Mrs. Bray determined not altogether to lose sight of the usual hope for her son, at least in one quarter ; so she fixed on Arthur Tremayne, Esquire, of Sydenham House, an old bachelor, who, in consequence of his father being then alive, used, at the age of sixty, to go by the name of *young* Mr. Tremayne. On what account the other godfather might be chosen, if any particular motive existed for the choice, I do not know, but he was a curious character, and was invariably called *Brigadier* Herring.

The Brigadier was a very tall, stout man, who had served in the wars, and possessed also the additional importance attached to having been a great traveller, which in his day was more remarkable than in our

own. Mr. Bray perfectly well remembers, though he was then a child, that whenever his godfather dined at the Abbey House, he was fond of appearing in the dress in which he had been presented to Marie Antoinette, Queen of France, being a blue coat with a red collar and cuffs. With this dress the Brigadier invariably put on a change of manners; for he became courtly and ceremonious, and delighted in repeating the circumstances of the honours he had enjoyed in his introduction to the Majesty of France. And with this story, though fifty times told, the Brigadier as constantly regaled his friends as they did him whenever he came to dine with them.

The Brigadier's grandeur, however, was mostly on the outside, for (whether from extravagance or misfortune I do not know) his purse was not always well filled; and, at the christening of little Edward Atkyns, he did Mrs. Bray the honour of borrowing five guineas of her, to present the nurse with her fee and the baby with a spoon, but which he afterwards never happened to recollect. Tired however at length with single-blessedness and ill-fortune, the Brigadier tried matrimony as a relief to both, and married an old lady for her money, declaring that had Marie Antoinette but had her head left on her shoulders to attain the same age, she would have been just such another looking person. But the lady, probably not being so confident in the power of her own charms, in which nearly seventy years had made some havoc, attempted to repair by dress what she wanted in beauty, decorating herself in flowers, frock, and sash, like a girl just escaped from school; and tormented her husband with a jealousy that allowed him no repose.

So much for the godfathers of little Edward Atkyns. He was, I am assured, a very good boy, only very much spoilt, and his mother's darling, consequently he became somewhat unruly; and when such was the case nothing would so soon quiet him as a pen or a pencil. His father often told him that so great was his propensity to imitation when a child, that he could write his own name very legibly before he knew a single letter of the alphabet. Whilst yet a mere boy, he made a portrait of his father, and of two other gentlemen. Though these drawings, of course, possessed no knowledge of art, yet so good were the likenesses, that it was agreed to have them framed. I have also the portrait of an old servant of the family by the same hand, and about the same period, which is such a characteristic drawing of an old man's head, that I hesitate not in saying it would be worth engraving.

On Mr. Bray's taking the picture of himself to be framed at Exeter (where indeed, with those of the other gentlemen, his son had just executed it, whilst they were together at the inn), it so chanced that the master of the shop possessed a considerable knowledge of the arts, and being requested to give his opinion of the portrait, replied that he could not say much for the execution of the work, but that it was an admirable likeness. "But what," said Mr. Bray, "will you think when I tell you that this boy is the artist?" The other said it was impossible so very young a child could have produced it. "It is true, I do assure you," replied Mr. Bray; "the lad is my own son." It is perhaps a pity that this very strong natural propensity was never regularly cultivated, since in after life Edward never resorted to the pencil,

excepting as a relaxation from other studies. The principles of art he never acquired, yet his sketches, merely by eye and feeling, have been honoured with the praises of a Stothard and a Lewis, who both said Nature had given Mr. Bray every quality requisite for an artist.

Little Edward's own inclinations, however, were always for the Church; and one of his childish amusements, when he visited at the house of some old ladies who were very fond of him, was to dress himself up in the maid's best white apron by way of surplice, and to bury two grotesque wooden figures that stood over the mantelpiece, representing Adam and Eve. I relate these childish anecdotes because I think so much may be traced of natural characteristics in the very sports of children; whilst trifles that, were they repeated, might excite the contempt of the critic, may make a deeper impression than he would be disposed to admit on the feelings and fancy of youth. The great difficulty was about Edward's education. His father wished to send him to Eton, and to make a great man of him, but poor Mrs. Bray never would consent to let her darling loose from her apron string. Unluckily she had heard that a boy had been drowned at Eton, so nothing could prevail with her to let Edward go thither for fear anything should happen to her dear and only son, who represented in his name and (she flattered herself) in his person the great Sir Edward Atkyns, the pride of her own ancestry. Too much doating affection was her only fault towards the boy; and this very fondness sometimes tormented him; for wishing that he should have what was then in fashion, and has never been so since; namely, a



pair of fine *peaks*, as they were called, one on either side the forehead, she caused the hair to be regularly shaved off, as if she were desirous that he might grow up like one of the portraits of Sir Walter Raleigh, in the days of Elizabeth; and so great was the dread entertained by the child of these shavings, that he would run and hide himself in a closet, and scream most heartily when the operation was about to begin.

So great was his love of a book, that he never was so happy as when he could get into a corner and sit down and read, hour after hour, alone; and being a most bashful boy, even to shamefacedness, his mother's praises of him before company were always such a penalty that he was most glad to escape the hearing. He possessed a good voice, but was so shy that he could never be persuaded to sing, unless he crept behind a curtain or under the table. The next inclination which this bashful boy discovered was for poetry; and at a very early age writing verses became to him a source of almost constant delight. Nor must I here omit the mention of the following circumstance, which occurred while he was yet a boy. Mr. Tasker, a celebrated physiognomist, and of his day the greatest Greek scholar in the West, who had studied the art of reading the human countenance more from Theophrastus and other classic authorities than from Lavater, was a constant observer of every face he chanced to look upon which afforded any promise for his remarks. Tasker also was an adept in anatomy; his principal work, indeed, was a dissertation on the wounds and deaths of the heroes described in the *Iliad*, proving the scientific knowledge of the poet. He likewise wrote an ode on the warlike genius of Great Britain, which, though praised, was also cen-

sured by Dr. Johnson, for making the genius of this country a woman. Mr. Bray, in company with his son, one day chanced to meet the physiognomist at Hatherleigh. Mr. Tasker had never before seen the boy, nor indeed knew of his existence ; but the latter, after dinner, having retired to ramble about the neighbouring fields, the former observed to Mr. Bray, "I understand that young gentleman is your son. I do not think he has spoken one word during the whole of the dinner-time ; but I will venture to say he is a poet."

"A poet!" exclaimed Mr. Bray, "I design him for a lawyer:—what makes you say so?" "I judge from his eyes," replied Mr. Tasker. Mr. Bray said that certainly the boy had a great love of poetry, and a habit, he believed, of writing verses, though he always hid or destroyed his productions ; and that his pursuits in general were of a studious and solitary character.

That the physiognomist was not mistaken in his prediction, I shall endeavour to prove before I close this letter, by inserting several original compositions that have never yet seen the light, which, I think, you will deem not unworthy being drawn from their present obscurity, and which will likewise show that Browne is not the only poet to whom Tavistock has given birth.<sup>2</sup>

To continue the narrative:—I should have mentioned, when speaking of the godfathers of little Edward, that Mr. Tremayne, designing to confer on him a benefit, had whilst yet a child, given to a clergyman who was related to him the living of Lew Trenchard, in Devon, to hold till his godson should be of sufficient age to take the duties of it upon

<sup>2</sup> Since the lamented death of Mr. Bray a selection of several of his poems and the *vers de société*, in two volumes, were in 1859 published by Messrs. Longman, London.

himself. But this kind act of Mr. Tremayne was rendered useless by Mr. Bray's determination to make the boy a lawyer; so that his cousin held the living till about a year ago, when he died.

The difficulty how to get the boy educated remained for some time in full force; since Eton and drowning having become synonymous in the mind of his mother, nothing could prevail with her to let him go thither; and a strange prejudice existed in the family against any other public school. Indeed it seemed very doubtful if he had any chance left of going to school at all, till his father so far mustered courage as to seize the occasion, in the absence of his wife for a few days, to smuggle little Edward off to school; and in order that his mother's heart might be set at ease by having him near home, he carried him no farther than to Moreton Hampstead; where he was set down, with a thousand cautions and charges about his safety, under the care of the Rev. Mr. Cake, curate of the parish, the Rev. Mr. Clack being rector of the same.

The history of the worthy rector was not a little remarkable. One of the Lords Courtenay (the grandfather of the present Earl of Devon, I believe, fell in love with a most beautiful and amiable girl, the daughter of an innkeeper at one of the universities, where he was a student. He married her; and extending his kindness towards her family, he brought up her brother, Mr. Clack, to the Church, and gave him the living of Moreton. This gentleman was as well informed as he was deserving, and possessed a good library. His curate, Mr. Cake, though no great scholar, was as perfect a gentleman as Lord Chesterfield himself would desire to see, but without any of

the objectionable parts of that nobleman's system of politeness. By him little Edward Atkyns was taken as much care of as if he had been made of china, and in danger of being broken. He learnt no more Latin and Greek than he pleased ; but, as he loved learning, he took very aptly and eagerly as much as Mr. Cake had power to bestow, and a little more, which, in process of time, he gained for himself. There was a book in the school, a very great favourite with the master, which the boys called the *Fat Book*, in ridicule of its being so very thin in bulk. This was an epitome of *Lord Chesterfield's Letters*, the study of which, in the opinion of, and according to the example set by, Mr. Cake, was of far more import than the classics. There is this to be said, however, in favour of Mr. Cake's system of education, that once a week he made the boys translate some of *Pliny and Cicero's Letters* into their mother tongue ; and afterwards caused them to compare their own performance with Melmoth's excellent translation. Thus, after all, Mr. Cake proved himself to be a lover of letters ; and I have often heard Mr. Bray declare that by these means his attention was very early directed to style in composition. The master had also an English translation of every classic, which he kept in the *sanctum sanctorum* of his own bedroom ; and thither would the boys enter by stealth, to consult what they called the *Blab Books*.

There was one thing in particular in which this gentleman displayed some antiquarian as well as classical knowledge—it was in a *conjecture* ; and less happy ones have obtained for many a man the honour of being deemed worthy to become an F.S.A. The cooks of Moreton had a custom, which Molly at the

school failed not to observe, of daily announcing to the boys the dinner hour, by saying—'Dinner's ready, *Soce*.' Now Mr. Cake considered this to be a remnant of a Romanized-British custom on the borders of Dartmoor; and that when the first invaders got a footing at Moreton Hampstead, they were in the habit of calling the native barbarians to feed at their general meal, by the familiar address of '*Socii*,' or companions.

Amongst Edward's school-friends was Baldwin Fulford, a branch of one of the most ancient families in Devon, whose ancestors were distinguished in history from the times of the Crusades down to those of the Stuarts. Baldwin Fulford, the first of that name, was so great a favourite with Cœur de Lion, that in the freedom of their friendship he ventured to say something which gave offence to the king. The courtiers, jealous of his influence, were in hopes it would be his ruin, and failed not to make the most of the offence. But Richard, either displeased at their malice, or too fond of his favourite to be long angry with him, merely said 'Muzzle the bear.' From that period a muzzle was added to the bear's head, which was Fulford's crest. Another of this gallant race, or perhaps Baldwin himself, delivered a Christian lady, in the true chivalrous spirit of the day, from a Saracen who held her captive within the walls of his castle in Palestine; and, according to tradition, brought her home to England, where first he gave her liberty, and then offered her his hand, which she accepted, and lived with him the mistress of his feudal halls in Devon. And in commemoration of this victory two Saracens were granted as supporters to the arms of the family, which they still retain.

During the holidays, Edward was highly gratified by going home with his schoolfellow to Great Fulford House ; a noble mansion, very celebrated during the Civil Wars, and where Charles II. was at one time concealed.<sup>3</sup>

Another of Edward's school companions was Sir John Collyton, whose father, whilst he was yet a babe in the cradle, took so strange a dislike to the poor boy that he would not see him, and cut him off with a shilling, leaving all his property to his sister. William Dacres Adams, afterwards secretary to Mr. Pitt, was another of his school friends, together with his brother, now General Sir George Adams ; and with these, and his other young companions, he was very happy : a circumstance which so mortified his mother, that when she tried to coax him home again from school, she left him in tears at her disappointment.

There were two or three very remarkable characters in the town of Moreton, who occasionally showed Edward some kind attention, and they deserve a mention amongst the oddities of their day. Fielding would have found in each a subject that might have furnished hints for character in his *Tom Jones*. One of these was a physician, a Doctor Vial ; whenever had a doctor a more happy name ? He was a desperate lover of whist ; Hoyle and Galen divided

<sup>3</sup> When speaking of the Fulford family, I cannot resist mentioning (though it has certainly nothing to do with the subject of this sketch) a remarkable circumstance which happened to Miss La Roche, the sister of Mrs. Fulford : it will scarcely gain credit as being true, yet it is so. Miss La Roche went with a party to see the Peak at Derbyshire. Being tired, she got up behind a clergyman who was riding. The horse fell when near the very summit of the Peak. The clergyman and the animal were both killed ; but Miss La Roche was providentially saved by her long hair getting entangled in one of the bushes.

his nights and days : which was most studied, I presume not to say. But nobody amongst the ladies, old or young, was half so popular as the doctor. His morning visits soothed nervous affections, and his evening hand at cards was generally irresistible. Could Doctor Vial have played twenty rubbers a night, he might have found partners for them all, among the somewhat antiquated virgins of Moreton Hampstead. They even lost their money to him as willingly as they would their hearts. One evening, in the midst of a deal, horrible to relate, he fell off his chair in a fit ! Consternation seized on all the company. Was he alive or dead ? they inquired with the frantic energy of a Lady Randolph, when asking the fate of her son. What was to be done ? All help was given ; hartshorn was poured almost pure down his throat by one kind female friend, whilst another feelingly singed the end of his nose with burnt feathers : all were in the breathless agony of suspense for his safety. At length he showed signs of life, and retaining the last fond idea which had possessed him at the moment he fell into the fit, to the joy of the whole company, exclaimed ‘What is trumps ?’

The other prominent character in the society of Moreton was a certain old Mr. Fynes, who, I believe, was a justice of the peace. ‘Red-post Fynes’ was his name ; for being the holder of a good deal of land, and considering himself a man of taste as well as of property, he loved to be distinguished for both ; so he painted all the gates of his fields a bright vermilion. ‘Red-post Fynes’ had a favourite relative whom he used to call his ‘nevvv.’ His ‘nevvv’ he brought up to the Church, and he afterwards rose to the dignity of a dean. The old gentleman was remarkable for

never having been able to learn to spell even the commonest words in his own language ; so that on the birth of his daughter he wrote word to a friend, that he had the pleasure to inform him that his wife was brought to bed of a fine *gull*. The word *usage* this very ingenious gentleman spelt without one letter belonging to it, and yet contrived to produce something like the word, at least in sound, for he wrote it thus—*yowewitch*. The Dean, finding that his uncle's orthography became a subject of perpetual jokes all the country round, grew rather ashamed of it, and so made the old gentleman a present of an Entick. But it was of little use ; for he could never hit on the two first letters of any word to find it out in the dictionary. There was one spot in Moreton which Mr. Fynes considered elevated him, whilst he filled it, to a post as important as any occupied by any magistrate throughout the whole county ; and that was his seat as president in the Punchbowl Tree : for it so happened there was in Moreton near his house a very old and very grotesque tree, cut and clipped into the form of a punchbowl ; whilst a table and seats were literally affixed within the green enclosure, to which they ascended by a little ladder, like the companion-ladder of a ship.

Here the worthies of the place of the Squire Western school would resort, and considered it a point of honour to drink till they could scarcely see each other across the table ; and there would they often tarry till they 'roused the night owl in a catch ;' whilst nothing could be more ludicrous than the picture presented by this nest of Bacchanals in the midst of the smooth-shaven verdure, receiving all the dust from the high-road beneath them, which



mingled with the clouds of their own tobacco. The Punchbowl Tree still exists at Moreton, though the oddities of the place, who at one period gave it notoriety, have for years been in their graves.

The shyness of little Edward was not conquered at Moreton; a public school perhaps might have done something towards a cure. So great was his bashfulness, that he could never find courage to ask any young lady to dance with him, till all the other boys had picked out the prettiest girls; and then some homely and neglected damsel, who had been left sitting alone, fell to his lot, as the last partner, perhaps, to be found in the room. This natural shyness argued very unfavourably for the profession which his father in his heart had destined for him, more especially as he was a boy who loved poetry and romance, had no aptitude for business, cared nothing for money, scarcely knew that two and two made four in his arithmetic, was so timid in company that he kept silence for fear of hearing his own voice, had a decided love of plain dealing, and thought the wrong side of a question should never be made to appear the right. Edward's father destined him for a lawyer: there never was a more mistaken choice.

At length Mr. Cake removed from Moreton to Alphington, near Exeter. In this village there was an opposition school, the success of which, considering the notorious adventures of the master, is not to be accounted for, unless it arose from his teaching the boys at a cheaper rate than the more aristocratic and respectable establishment of Mr. Cake. The name of the master was Halloran. I conclude by this that he must have derived his origin from the land of Erin. It is the more likely, as he was of a very warm

and passionate temper,—one of those who act first and think afterwards; and this he once did in a way that caused him to be indicted for murder in a criminal court. The deed took place whilst he was in the navy, before he set up the profession of training boys in the way they should go; a thing in which, it is hoped, his first maxim was “Do as I say, and not as I did.” For he had stabbed a man in a passion on board ship; and if his legal adviser had not stopped his mouth on the trial, by preventing his declaring he was drunk when he gave the blow, he would have criminated himself; and it is not unlikely that his own declaration, with this additional offence, would have turned the balance of justice, so as to make him kick the air if not the beam. Mr. Cake’s boys used to look down with sovereign contempt on Mr. Halloran’s boys; and jibes and jests about Jack Ketch, &c., were never wanting in the small fire of schoolboy wit, when there was any skirmishing between them. Halloran’s lads, in fact, were generally the sons of petty tradesmen in Exeter, or of persons who got for their children a cramming of Latin and Greek as cheap as they could. Amongst them, however, there was one youth of uncommon talent; and who, in consequence of that talent, united to his own industry and the kindness of friends, gradually rose to high distinction in the profession of the law, and would, had he lived, in all probability have become Lord Chancellor. This youth was no less a person than the late Lord Gifford, who commenced his legal career as clerk to an attorney in Exeter. Many years after, he and Mr. Bray (during the time the latter was at the bar) went the same circuit, became friends, and often talked over their schoolboy days together. Halloran’s finale must not

be forgotten : though he had escaped hanging and drowning too, he was nevertheless fated to pass through troubled waters ; for, in consequence of forging a frank in the name of Mr. Garrow, he was transported to Botany Bay.

Emancipated from school, Edward speedily verified the prediction of the physiognomist, for he gave himself up heart and soul to poetry ; and in his eighteenth year a neat little volume appeared of these juvenile productions, which were principally circulated amongst friends, yet not wanting the favourable notice of some of the critics of the day. And Park, in his edition of *Ritson's Collection of Select English Songs*, gave with warm commendation the only two songs that appeared in that early volume.<sup>4</sup>

But it was not poetry alone that engaged his attention ; for even at this early period he formed the scheme of writing a history of his native town, made his notes for it, and commenced those excursions which led the way to his subsequent investigations and discoveries on Dartmoor. His pencil was not idle ; and he relieved the hours of more severe application by the study of music. He had a fine ear, and in this pursuit took so much delight, that in a few years he composed an immense number of original melodies, a few of which have been very beautifully arranged, the words being likewise Mr. Bray's, by a lady accomplished in that science. To these studies he added also those of the modern languages. I am induced more particularly to mention this, because the familiar acquaintance he formed with the Italian

<sup>4</sup> These songs I have introduced (pp. 183, 227), together with his ballad of 'Midsummer Eve,' in the first volume of *Fitz of Fitzford ; a Legend of Devon*.

and its literature gained for him, a few years after, that intimate friendship with the celebrated Mr. Mathias, which proved one of the happiest circumstances of his life. He had a great aptitude for learning languages, and spoke the French like his native tongue; for Tavistock being at that period the chief depôt for French prisoners on parole, he formed an acquaintance with several French officers of great intelligence, particularly with a Monsieur Cayeux, who was taken prisoner during the early part of the war. German literature also attracted his attention; and his high estimation of Gesner induced him to attempt a series of English idyls. The first part of these was published in 1800; and though like the former volume it was circulated principally amongst friends, and little advertised, yet was it most favourably noticed by some of the leading periodicals; more especially, I believe, by the *British Critic*.

I must not omit to mention, that before Mr. Bray's going to London, the then Duke of Bedford came down to Tavistock for the purpose of raising a volunteer corps among his tenantry. That no appearance of favouritism might take place, the names of some of the most respectable of the sons of the neighbouring gentry, among them Mr. Bray, were to be drawn for, to decide whether they were to serve as officers or privates. Mr. Bray's lot was to serve in the latter capacity. He, however, was never called upon to do so; as the Duke, on his return, gave, I believe, offence to the ministry by a speech in the House of Peers; and his offer to raise the corps was not accepted. But some time after, however, on a corps of miners being established as volunteers, under the name of the

Royal Devon Miners, to be commanded by the Vice Warden, Warwick Hele Tonkin, Esq., Mr. Bray's father and Mr. Tonkin's son were appointed captains, and Edward was fixed on as captain-lieutenant. The ordinary commissions were signed by the Lord Warden, according to an act then recently passed; but as the grade of captain-lieutenant was not specified in this act, Mr. Bray's commission required the sign manual; and King George III., therefore, honoured him with the title of "His well-beloved Edward Atkyns Bray, Esq.," in a regular army commission, excepting such alteration as the name of the corps required. Mr. Bray still preserves this commission as a relic, as well of regard as of veneration for that most honoured sovereign.<sup>5</sup>

It was deemed by government that the services of the miners, as they were well acquainted with the management of machinery, would be more efficient as artillerymen; and into an artillery corps they were therefore turned. Mr. Bray became their captain commandant till they were incorporated with the

<sup>5</sup> I cannot here omit the mention of a circumstance which brought Mr. Bray in contact with royalty. Some time after his arrival in London he had the honour to meet the present king, then Duke of Clarence, at a party. As he had never before been in company with any of the royal family, a lady belonging to the house had scarcely given him the hint that he would find it was the custom for the whole of the company to rise on the entrance of the Duke, when His Royal Highness walked into the room. He soon after beckoned to her, when she joined him; and, to Mr. Bray's surprise, she speedily returned, and asked if he could guess wherefore His Royal Highness had beckoned to her. Of course Mr. Bray replied that he could not conjecture. She said it was for the purpose of asking who *he* was; at the same time intimating a hope that Mr. Bray bore His Majesty's commission. Certainly Mr. Bray was tall enough for a grenadier officer, being six feet in height, and very upright; but I believe he did not tell the story in what way he already bore a commission.

stannary artillery of Cornwall. In that capacity he was twice in barracks at Devonport, then Dock, previous to his being called to the bar, of which I shall soon have occasion to speak. And here I cannot omit an amusing anecdote respecting his various professions. At a visitation, soon after he had taken holy orders, the Rev. Dr. Hunt, a well-known clergyman in Devon, thus addressed him:—"Mr. Bray, I have had the pleasure of seeing you but three times in my life: the first was in your regimentals, at a dinner given by General England to the military; the second was in your wig and gown, as a lawyer, in the court at Exeter; and now I see you in gown and bands, as Vicar of Tavistock."

In the year 1801 Mr. Bray removed to London, and was entered as a student at the Middle Temple: five years after he was called to the bar. During his residence in the Temple, though he devoted a considerable portion of his time to the study of the law, he did not fail to cultivate, and assiduously, his more favourite pursuits, and applied himself closely to Italian poetry. In this language he once ventured to write a sonnet, and addressed it to his friend Mr. Mathias. He likewise sedulously studied the works of Lord Bacon, and wrote copious notes on the greater part of the writings of that eminent philosopher. These notes Dr. Shaw, of the British Museum, expressed a wish that Mr. Bray would publish, appended to a new edition of that author. I mention this as a proof of the good opinion that great naturalist entertained of my husband. The notes on Bacon, however, remain still in manuscript in this house. Mr. Bray had a great respect for the Doctor, whose real worth was best appreciated by an

intimate acquaintance, since his manners were somewhat fantastic, as he was fond, perhaps by way of *delassement*, of conversing on ordinary subjects too much in the style of the fashionables of the day. So fond was the doctor of trifles, that he was never better pleased than when requested to repeat *Little Red Riding Hood*. And indeed it had been one of his amusements to decorate the walls of his favourite room at the British Museum, by sticking it all over with butterflies, which he had cut out for that purpose from the work of a brother naturalist. Such were the trifles with which a man whose fame will be most enduring amused his leisure hours! His own brother, also a doctor (of divinity), used to call him 'Doctor Cockleshell.'

In London Mr. Bray became acquainted with Mr. Edwards, the celebrated bookseller, whose library, besides being decorated by the finest Etruscan vases, was a treasure-house for the most rare and valuable works; among others, the *princeps* edition of Herodotus. It was by Mr. Edwards that he was introduced to Mr. Mathias; when their mutual love of Italian literature led the way to that bond of friendship which so long subsisted between them, and was only interrupted by the departure of the former for Italy. In London, also, Mr. Bray became known to Sheridan, at the house of Mr. Richardson, M.P., with whose family he was on the most intimate terms. Richardson was the author of the *Heiress*; and, with some others, wrote the *Rolliad*. The acquaintance of this last-named gentleman with Sheridan was a most unhappy circumstance for his family, as it induced him to embark too much of his property in the losing speculation of Drury Lane Theatre; and helped on

those embarrassments which left them at his death in such reduced circumstances, that a widow and four very amiable daughters had but very inadequate means of support. At the time Mr. Bray knew Sheridan, he had so habituated himself to the pleasures of the bottle, that he had lost much of that vivacity which at one period brought into play his wit and talents, and rendered his society so bewitching. Sheridan, in fact, had sunk into a toper; and there was very little left of what he had been but an occasional burst of vivacious expression, when his eye, always remarkable, would become lighted up with a lustre that was almost more than natural. But he would soon sink again into an ordinary person; and to take two glasses to every other's one seemed with him the chief object of attention: so completely may the brightest talents be lost or obscured by the degrading love of drink.

At Richardson's, likewise, Mr. Bray used to meet that most amiable and excellent man, Mr. Shield the composer, of whose character and manners he always speaks in terms of the highest esteem. He frequently heard this delightful musician with his violin accompany Richardson's daughters, whilst they would sing to their piano some of the composer's songs. Shield was a man of the finest feelings, and so alive to harmony, that his tears were frequently the accompaniment of his most favourite melodies.

In Devonport Mr. Bray had become acquainted with Dr. Wolcott, better known as Peter Pindar; and in London with Barry the painter, with Dr. Coombe, Browne the celebrated traveller, Flaxman the sculptor, John Kemble, the good-natured and amiable John Taylor, editor of the *Sun*, with Sir Joseph



Banks, Sir Francis Bourgeois, Lady Hamilton, and many other eminent or celebrated persons of the day. Concerning these, I have a few anecdotes which may not be altogether devoid of interest in the repetition. Mr. Bray was also slightly acquainted with Walking Stuart. On looking over some of the notes he made during his residence in the Middle Temple, I found a paper written after his having received a visit from the philosopher, paid to him in his chambers. I shall here copy it verbatim, as it is not a little curious.

MEMORANDA AFTER AN INTERVIEW AND CONVERSATION WITH WALKING STUART.

“This philosopher, like his predecessor of antiquity, who instituted the Peripatetic school, has acquired his name from his perambulations on foot. The difference between them is, however, that the former has visited almost every country in the world in search of knowledge, and the latter investigated and taught it within the narrow limits of the grove of Academus. Stuart has not only taken greater pains in the pursuit of intellectual wealth, but, besides rivalling the Athenian, in his oral communications, has diffused it in his writings. To institute a comparison between them would lead me too far, and require greater talents than I possess. I will content myself, therefore, with stating a few remarks I made during the short time I was in his company, and will first introduce him by a description of his person.

“Had I not, from his name, supposed him to be a Scotsman, his person alone would have suggested it. From his language, which is generally an infallible criterion, I should not have been able to form any

conjecture; nor indeed do I mean to decide what countryman he is. Were I even to ask him, the answer I should receive would probably be—‘I am a native of the world;’ for in reply to a question, ‘Whether he had any children?’ he said, ‘Yes; the good and virtuous are all my children.’ Apparently between fifty and sixty years of age, he is rather tall and lusty. His face, with high cheek bones and Roman nose, is dark by nature or by his travels in hot countries. His forehead bears the wrinkles of reflection more than age. By his dress we may imagine Philosophy is not more liberal to her sons at present than she was of old. He wore a black coat, over which was thrown a spencer with half the arms cut off. Whether it were from economy or taste, I thought it had by no means an unpleasing effect. I understand that for some time after he returned from Asia he wore a Persian dress. His hair was powdered. I mention this as, in these days, the hair has expressed a great deal of meaning.<sup>6</sup>

“The word philanthropy is of too limited a signification to express the system upon which he acts: it is not benevolence to man alone, but to every animated being. He assumes, therefore, the name of an Homocousiast, from ὁμοουσιος, *ejusdem essentiaē consubstantialis*; compounded of ὁμος and ουσια, *similis essentia*.

“From a short conversation, or rather being present at a conversation which he held with another gentleman, I cannot be presumed to have formed a precise and correct idea of his opinions; but I am told that he professes himself an atheist. It has been denied that any human being could really dis-

<sup>6</sup> This was written soon after the days of the French Revolution.

believe the existence of a Deity. Whoever has professed it has been held to do so from vanity and a wish for notoriety. But of this I am convinced, that, whatever are the opinions which Stuart professes, he sincerely believes them from a conviction in his own mind of their supposed truth. The conversation he held in my hearing was mostly of a moral nature, with only a few references to the subject of religion. However, as a proof that his opinions are peculiar on this head, I need only mention that, in quoting some passages from Pope's *Essay on Man*, he said the following couplet he would have written thus :

“‘All are but parts of one stupendous whole,  
Whose body *matter* is, and *power* the soul;’

instead of—

“‘Whose body *Nature* is, and *God* the soul.’

“Of the philosophy of Epictetus he said the sum was no more than this :

“‘What can't be cured  
Must be endured.’

“Bolingbroke he considered one of the greatest geniuses that ever lived, though he had his prejudices.

“The mind, Stuart said, was constantly employed in *action* of thought, or *object* of thought. The first is where the mind thinks on things of its own creation, or embodies abstract ideas and gives action to non-existences, such as angels, devils, &c. The second is when it is busied in real things, and such as are objects of the senses. Men had considered mind as a *sack*, and stuffed it with all kinds of learning; but it should be considered as an instrument,

and should be so managed as to bring all its own powers into action. If it be filled, let it be filled with its own ideas.

"A man of science is not always a man of sagacity: generally, indeed, otherwise. We have made great advances in science, but little in sagacity.

"Of Sir Isaac Newton, Stuart said that, though he disclaimed hypothesis, and professed to rest his philosophy on facts, he is yet guilty of an hypothesis by calling the *influence* which bodies have to adhere or to repulse *gravitation*, *i.e.*, making the effects the cause.

"Of Horne Tooke, he said that he was no sound reasoner, and was too much tied down to the logic of the schools, with his '*grant this*,' and his '*ergo*.' He was also too fond of sarcasm, or a piece of mere wit. Tooke, in reply to the bishops who thought his doctrines might prejudice Christianity, said that was no concern of his, let them see to that. Adams, President of America, he considered had given the most correct account of popular governments; he in a manner prognosticated the dreadful effects of the French Revolution, by pointing out the dangers of investing a democratical government with too much power. This he proved from history, and the French have given another example.

"Stuart said that ethics would not admit of mathematical truths, but analogical; viz., sometimes it is virtue to kill a man. Some, he observed, called *doubt* the gate of knowledge; but he called it the very temple itself.

"His travels on foot, he told us, were principally designed to investigate moral truth, the progress of mind, and human happiness. China is the only

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country he has not visited. He formerly used a vegetable, but now an animal diet. He wants strength of a morning unless he eats his constant supper—fat ham. He never drinks wine, but malt liquors; smokes sometimes of an evening, and now and then goes to a royal theatre for relaxation. He likes the Serpentine River in Hyde Park for the air and *view*. He is rather deaf; speaks deliberately, yet in the most appropriately eloquent style. In a late publication he has attacked the critical reviewers. His philosophy is to teach man how best to promote his happiness; and his study is the *discipline* of the mind. His great conclusion is, that *virtue is happiness*.

“Mr. Taylor and Stuart spent the evening with me. He is considered by some as mad; and one, in order to prove that he was so, said that none but a madman would have remained on board ship pent up in a hencoop for a fortnight.

“But the truth of the story is, that Stuart was in Persia when there was a bloody war between two nations; where, if he had remained, he would have been obliged to side with one party or the other. He took, therefore, the only method of getting out of the country, which was to solicit the crew of a Turkish vessel to take him on board. They refused on the score of his being an infidel, and that it would endanger the ship. They contrived, however, a method to cheat the vengeance of their prophet, in somewhat the same manner as our stage-coach drivers contrive to evade the act of Parliament limiting the number of passengers, by hanging the frame of a bed at the side of the vessel, in which he was obliged to remain, washed by the spray of the sea, for a week or

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ten days. This was certainly far better than being murdered, or made prisoner and confined for life or starved to death.

"His character has been attempted, but very unsuccessfully, to be introduced on the stage, in the afterpiece of *Hartford Bridge*, though it has been generally supposed to allude to Browne. This dramatic hero talks of having skipped over mountains, laments his having lost his *walking* travels, and that he would make no scruple to rob a church, &c.; also of his being fond of singing in different languages; which Stuart did once at a meeting of the Charter House.

"His most peculiar doctrine seems to be a transmigration not of souls but bodies; or a perpetual reciprocation of atoms. He says that the works of Bacon contain only the *seeds* of knowledge."

In a paper, dated July 1st, 1803, Mr. Bray's notes contain the following particulars respecting that celebrated wit and poet, Mr. Jerningham:

"I this day dined with my friend Mr. Taylor, at a restaurateur's, where he introduced me to Mr. Jerningham, the poet. He is about sixty years of age; but his florid complexion makes him look some years younger. He mixes a good deal with the first circles, and indeed is almost every night to be found at the opera. He has also a general acquaintance among the literary world, of which he is himself a distinguished ornament. His conversation is stored with anecdotes of men of letters, from which, indeed, the biography of each might be collected.

"Talking of Pope and of Martha Blount, the poet's favourite, he said that she was his cousin;

and agreed that she treated Pope with cruelty. Mr. Jerningham was introduced to her on his return from abroad, at the time of the coronation, and recollects he was requested not to mention the name of Mr. Pope in her hearing. He has frequently been rowed by the waterman who was accustomed to take Pope, almost every fine day, to Lady ——'s, whence he returned home in her chariot. He always dressed in black, with a bag wig, and when the weather was chilly, sat in a chair in the boat, with a covering similar to those used by the porters in their masters' halls. The poet at length became so irritable, that he gave a general order not to let a gentleman be admitted who frequently came to see him, because he talked too much for him. At last, however, the gentleman introduced himself among a party; but as Pope never spoke to him, he was obliged to give up his acquaintance. We formed the plan of paying a visit together to the poet's villa; and Mr. Taylor insisted that when it took place, we should each write some verses on the subject. And, in allusion to our present meeting, he made an extemporaneous parody on Dryden, beginning,

“‘Three poets in three distant counties born,’ &c.

“Bishop Hurd, and Potter, the translator of *Æschylus*, were tutors to the Prince of Wales. The latter only retains the Prince's friendship, and whenever he comes to town is constantly welcomed at Carlton House. Potter, for the greatest part of his life, was in the most indigent circumstances; and as he was curate to Hurd, Mr. Jerningham, on a vacancy of the Laureateship, wrote to the latter, requesting he would recommend him to his Majesty

for the situation. The Bishop said, when he had an opportunity, he would mention it at the levee, though he might have had an audience on the subject. By this neglect, Warton was appointed, who, though in no good circumstances at that time himself, said that had he known of the application he would have waived the appointment in favour of Potter. The latter, now in his old age, is in the happiest circumstances, being, through the Prince, made Prebendary of Norwich Cathedral.

"Whilst the Prince was under the tuition of Hurd, and lived at Kew, commenced his acquaintance with Mrs. Robinson, who took a house in the neighbourhood. When the evening fixed for a rendezvous was come, the Prince was sure, by some excuse or other, to send the bishop early to bed, well knowing that he would soon fall asleep; then, with a silk ladder, he climbed the garden wall, and was received on the other side by his mistress."

The following notes from Mr. Bray's papers, dated January 15th, 1804, respecting Sir Francis Bourgeois, are curious; I therefore give them a place:—

"Having more than once met Sir Francis Bourgeois, he the other day offered to show me Mr. Desenfant's pictures. I accordingly called by appointment this morning at No. 39, Charlotte Street, Portland Place, where he and Mr. Desenfant reside. Two or three gentlemen were there at the same time. One of them, a Mr. Howard, or Troward (I do not know which), a lawyer, was present. He was principally concerned in the management of Hastings's trial. So many MS. books were necessary on that occasion, that they were carried to Westminster in two carts. He kept twelve or fourteen clerks con-



stantly reading, in order to mark passages, digest, and give him an abstract of their contents. Burke was at his house for ten or twelve hours almost every day during that period, and has stayed in his house for a month together. I understand he has a small but highly valuable collection of pictures, some of which Bonaparte wished to purchase of him.

“To return to Mr. Desenfant’s collection. The first picture Sir Francis showed to me was a nymph, by Titian ; for which, with some others, Le Brun, on the part of Bonaparte, offered him a *carte blanche*. Perhaps it may be worth six or eight thousand pounds. She is represented as asleep in a recumbent posture, and naked. Cupid bends over her pointing with his dart, by which we are to suppose that the painter would give us to understand that Love was the subject of her dream. It is the Venus de Medici in a different posture, and as remarkable for its colouring as for its correctness of drawing. It is kept covered with a silk curtain. On my remarking that, like the Venus de Medici, the face was not so perfect as the rest of the body, Sir Francis remarked that, for wise purposes, our tastes were very different. This Venus had dark hair ; his taste was, he confessed, for very fair women with red, I suppose *auburn*, hair, which he thought, with a little *powder*, possessed a most bewitching appearance. Women of this description were generally of a fair and delicate complexion ; but I remarked that they were also commonly freckled and rather coarse. The latter, he said, might, and should in all women, be corrected by essences and perfumes. In this room is a Madonna and Child, with a basket, in the corner, very small, which every one allows to be an undoubted Correggio.

In the next are four by Murillo, the Martyrdom of St. Sebastian by Guido Reni, &c.

"Talking of statues, Sir Francis said that Mr. Townley, of Westminster, had the finest private collection in the kingdom : of which what struck him the most was the bust of Minerva, with her helmet and breast-plate of bronze, that by a kind of contrast gave life and animation to the whole. He allowed, however, that this taste may be carried too far, as it was amongst the ancients, who occasionally painted or enamelled the eyes of their statues. This he considered as a false taste. I compared it to a wax doll, whose eyes are made to move by springs. A gentleman present, however, differed from him, and said that the idea from seeing statues with cavities in the eyes, of their being filled up with enamelled ones, was wrong, as they were filled with precious stones, generally sapphires, which produced an effect altogether astonishing. No one could look at such an instant without being so struck as to be obliged to recede some paces. It was not from the resemblance to nature, but from the dazzling effect of its appearance.

"Sir Francis said that there were, he understood, some of the finest pictures in the world at the Escorial, in Spain. But the finest of them, consisting of about *twenty* Venuses by Titian, were seldom shown ; and indeed some of them had been burnt by the priests from an over-scrupulousness, an idea of their evil tendency. On the whole, however, he agreed that it might affect the generality of persons, as might also statues ; but that artists seldom or never experienced any injury from such subjects.

"One room consisted of Poussins, containing about eight or nine, a thing believed to be unparalleled.

"In the drawing-room is a *chef d'œuvre* of Cuyp; but in another a cattle piece, by Potter, superior to anything of the former. Claude was born in the first year of the sixteenth century, so that his own proficiency in painting, and that of the age in which he lived, may be known together. Sir Francis, at sight, can tell to a year or two when his works were executed. Indeed I think that his own style resembles that of Claude, when he painted with a clear and not a glowing tint. The pictures are moved on hinges, and some even draw out into a good light by means of iron supports—a most excellent plan!"

From some conversation with a literary gentleman in town, respecting the celebrated French poet De Lille, Mr. Bray received much information. The following he noted down:—

"The Abbé de Lille is not quite blind, as it is generally reported of him. His vivacity in company is very engaging, which is increased by his rich fund of anecdote. With respect to his writings he is impatient of criticism. His undertaking the translation of Milton was at the suggestion of some English gentlemen, who, about a dozen in number, agreed to give him, on its completion, one hundred pounds. One of them called on him soon after, and found him with a wretched little edition of Milton, the text of which was so small that, had he continued to read it, it would probably have soon rendered him quite blind. He had also a French prose translation. The gentleman made him a present of Newton's edition and a Latin translation, from which he acknowledged he had derived great benefit. He was at first greatly at a loss to translate the allegory of Sin and Death, since the personification in French

must have been entirely reversed; sin (*le péché*) being masculine; and death (*la mort*) feminine. However, he at length supplied those personages by *Le Trépas* and *La Révolte*. De Lille had not before sufficiently appreciated the genius of Milton; but soon found reason to consider him the greatest poet that ever existed. The translation in parts is remarkably fine, but in others equally censurable; and though those passages have been pointed out to him he would never correct or alter them. The French language labours under the disadvantage of not being able to express, in a concise or even elegant manner, the different positions of the body. How could the French translate—‘She *sat* like Patience on a monument;’ ‘*Stood* like a tower;’ ‘*Rides* in the whirlwind and directs the storm?’ &c. In De Lille’s translation of Virgil’s *Georgics*, it was objected to him that he had omitted the name of Mécænas in the opening of the first book. He confessed its impropriety, but did not alter it.”

The following notes respecting Mr. Mathias I extract from Mr. Bray’s notes, which he heads as ‘Memorabilia.’

“27th January, 1807.—In a conversation which I had with Mr. Mathias on Italian literature, he informed me that Gray, though so great a poet himself, and an admirer of the poets of Italy, was unacquainted with the works of Guidi, Menzini, Filicaja, &c., and indeed of almost all that are contained in his *Componimenti Lirici*. He had once in his possession the commonplace-book of Gray; and it contained very copious extracts from the *Comentarj* of Crescimbeni. He told me he could gratify me with a sight of Gray’s handwriting, and

fetched from his library a fasciculus, being a kind of commentary in English on Pindar and Aristophanes. It was written remarkably neat and plain, but rather stiff, and bearing evident marks of being written slowly. It had a great resemblance to the Italian mode of writing; every part of the letters being nearly of an equal thickness. Gray wrote always with a crow-quill.

"Observing no obliterations or erasures, and indeed only one or two interlineations, I remarked that it must have been a fair copy, and wondered how he could have taken so much pains, unless he had intended it for publication. But Mr. Mathias assured me that Gray was so averse to publication, that, had not a surreptitious copy of his *Elegy in a Country Churchyard* appeared, he never would have published it; and, even when he did, it was without his name. The reason that he was so correct was that he never committed anything to paper till he had most maturely considered it beforehand.

"Mr. Mathias explained to me how he was so well acquainted with these particulars respecting Gray, by informing me that he was most intimate with Mr. Nichols, the familiar friend and executor of Gray, who had lent him the MSS. On my lamenting that they were never made public, he said that it was not for want of his most earnest solicitation; but that Mr. Nichols was an old man, and wished even to conceal that he was in possession of any such precious relics, lest he should be plagued with requests to have them copied, or at least to show them. He therefore in a manner enjoined me to secrecy, and I consequently commit the present memoranda to paper merely for my own satisfaction, that by an occasional

inspection the pleasure I received from this conversation may be more forcibly brought to my recollection. For the same reason, and as those MSS. are never likely to be made public, I shall enter more at large upon the consideration of them ; at least as much as a cursory inspection during a morning call would permit.

“As Gray always affixed the date to everything he wrote, which, as Mr. Mathias informed me, was also the custom of Petrarch, it seems that he wrote his remarks on Pindar at rather an early age. I think the date was 1747. It is very closely written. The Greek characters are remarkably neat: he begins with the date of the composition, and takes into his consideration almost everything connected with it, both chronologically and historically. The notes of the scholiasts do not escape him; and he is so minute as to direct his attention to almost every expression. He appears to have reconciled many apparent incongruities, and to have elucidated many difficulties. I the more lament these valuable annotations remain unpublished, as they would prove that, in the opinion of so great a man, the English language is in every respect adequate to express everything that criticism the most erudite can require. It presented to my eye a most gratifying novelty to see the union of Greek and English, and to find that they harmonized together as well as Greek and Latin.

“The remarks on the plays of Aristophanes were so minute, not only expressing when they were written and acted, but when they were revived, that, as Mr. Mathias justly observed, one would think he was reading an account of some modern comedy, instead of the dramatic compositions of about two

thousand years old. Gray also left behind him very copious remarks upon Plato, which had formerly been in Mr. Mathias's hands ; likewise large collections respecting the customs of the ancients, &c. And so multifarious and minute were his investigations, that he directed his attention even to the *supellex*, or household furniture of the ancients, collecting together all the passages in the classics that had any reference to the subject.

"Mr. Mathias showed me likewise many sheets copied by Gray from some Italian author ; also, I believe, an historical composition, and a great many genealogies, of which Gray was particularly fond. On my remarking that I wished Gray had written less genealogies, and more poetry, he informed me that the reason Gray had written so little poetry was from the great exertion, which he made no reserve in confessing, that it cost him in the labour of composition. Mr. Mathias informed me that he had seen the original copy of Gray's *Ode on the Progress of Poesy* ; that there were not so many alterations as he expected ; which was evidently owing to his method of long previous meditation ; and that some of the lines were written three or four times over : and then, what is not always the case with an author, the best was always adopted.

"He said there was nothing of which Gray had not the profoundest knowledge, at least of such subjects as come under the denomination of learning, except mathematics ; of which, as well as his friend Mason, he was as completely ignorant, and which he used frequently to lament. He was acquainted with botany, but hardly seems to have paid it the compliment it deserves, when he said he learnt it

merely for the sake of sparing himself the trouble of thinking."

Of Browne, the traveller, I have not heard Mr. Bray relate many anecdotes, as he was so very silent and sedate a personage that he seldom entered into conversation of any length, and did not talk much about his travels. Of the surpassing beauty, the talents and vivacity of Lady Hamilton, I have heard much from Mr. Bray's account of her. Her person, when he knew her, was the largest of the large; but her face was still exquisitely beautiful, both in feature and expression, with large eyes that seemed to speak her every thought and feeling. She had a peculiar grace in her vivacity, and sang delightfully. He once heard her sing, in an inimitable style, an Italian comic song, in which she performed both parts or characters engaged in the scene. The song represented a *maestro di capella* teaching a young nun to sing. Mr. Bray was informed by his friend, the late Admiral Bedford, who was intimately acquainted both with her and Nelson, that the hero's attachment to her commenced in a most romantic friendship; nor would the old Admiral admit that Nelson had ever gone beyond what was strictly right in his devotion to this Circe. If this be true, it was a pity that any friendship for another should have caused Nelson to part from an unoffending wife, whose only fault was that of being her rival's inferior in talents and attractions.

In London Mr. Bray met Horne Tooke at a dinner party, where some dispute arose about the volunteer system. Tooke, who was surrounded by his admirers and friends, amongst whom was Sir Francis Burdett, reprobated the system just named in a very violent manner, which might have arisen, as Mr. Bray after-



wards learned, in consequence of his own proffered services having been refused. This attack was levelled against the gentleman of the house, who, feeling himself hard pressed, turned round to my husband, and said it was scarcely right that he, who was only a private, should bear the brunt of such an unmeasured attack when a captain was present.

Mr. Bray happened to be seated next Horne Tooke, who absolutely turned round in his chair, and immediately opened his fire upon him. Previous to this dinner, Mr. Bray had felt an extreme degree of curiosity to meet Horne Tooke, and entertained the highest opinion of the talents and acuteness he had shown in his first edition of the *Diversions of Purley*. But Tooke's conversation after dinner had been of so improper and even gross a nature, that, coupled with his political violence, it had effectually removed all the previous sense of respect which Mr. Bray entertained for him; and enabled him, notwithstanding his natural diffidence and his youth, to be cool and collected in his reply to arguments so absurd, that only one need be specified: for Tooke gravely asserted that give him but time, and he would collect together maid-servants who, with their mops and broom-sticks, would turn all the volunteers to the right about.

Mr. Bray asked him—if courage were not the characteristic of Englishmen; and begged to know if Englishmen ceased to be such by becoming volunteers? This turned the tide in his favour; though the decided admirers of Horne Tooke were not a little surprised to find that a young man, and a modest one too, would venture to contradict their oracle. And indeed Sir Francis Burdett took an opportunity after-

wards of saying to Mr. Bray, "I knew not what you had said to my friend, as I did not hear the whole of the conversation; but you have done what no other person, to my knowledge, has ever done before—you have put Horne Tooke in a passion."

Amongst Mr. Bray's literary friends he had the pleasure to number Mr. Merrivale,<sup>7</sup> who is well known for his continuation of Beattie's *Minstrel*, and his translations from the Greek Anthology, and was, I believe, in Gifford's time, an occasional contributor to the *Quarterly Review*. Miss Taylor, afterwards Mrs. Austin, Dr. Coombe, his son Taylor Coombe, of the British Museum, and many others, were also his friends; and he occasionally met Mrs. Opie, Repton, Dr. Parr, and Jerningham in the society of London; whilst at the houses of Mr. Peter Moore, Lady Metcalf, Lady Macdonald, and others, Mr. Bray mingled with the fashionable world of the day, and was present at most of their parties. But the gaieties of the last-named circles did not draw him off from an attention to his professional pursuits; for, as far as the study of the law on general principles was connected with the history of his country, he took great delight in it: the technical detail was his aversion. But even this he endeavoured to conquer as far as it might be necessary; whilst the muse of English and Italian poetry became his solace in the intervals of his more serious occupations. Many of Mr. Bray's poetical pieces were written under the inspiration of strong feelings, produced by the circumstances of the moment. Thus his *Lines on the Battle of Maida*

<sup>7</sup> Since deceased. He was a judge in the Bankruptcy Court, and father to the late Herman Merrivale, and of the present Charles Merrivale, Esq., both men of great eminence in the literary world.

were composed whilst the Park and Tower guns were proclaiming the victory. The *Ode on the Death of Nelson*, which was published and very favourably received, was written whilst he was waiting to receive a party of friends at his chambers in the Temple, who came thither to witness the procession of boats from Greenwich Hospital up the Thames, bearing the body of the hero previous to its interment in St. Paul's.

By those friends who were intimately acquainted with Mr. Bray during his residence in town, I have been informed that, though in general company, from his silent and retiring manners, he did not always appear to enjoy it so much as a young man might be expected to do, yet he had always a high relish for that in which either superior intelligence or worth might be found.

He was never remarked, however, for deficiency in vivacity when *tête-à-tête* with a companion or friend ; but if a third person joined in the chat, he invariably gave place to him, and generally relapsed into his usual taciturnity. Yet, like the silent gentleman in the *Spectator*, he was an attentive observer of all that passed ; and frequently made any little occurrence the subject of an almost spontaneous poem, or copy of verses ; for which *we* have no definite name, but which our neighbours the *French* have happily denominated *vers de société*. Of these he has a very large collection ; I doubt if any poet of the present time has ever produced so many. Of their merit I must not speak ; and as I shall here give only some few as examples, I leave you, who are so far more capable of forming a right judgment than myself, to declare if these *vers de société* would not alone entitle

my husband to an honourable place amongst the poets of Devon. You will also see by them that Mr. Bray was most susceptible in feeling the charm of female society. He may perhaps be accused of having been too universally so; but the ladies have no cause to complain; since the least beauty of person, mind, or character in them never escaped his notice, and generally inspired him to celebrate either in the most enthusiastic or impassioned verse. It is due, however, to the gravity of his clerical character to state that, with few exceptions, all these poems were written when a very young man, and whilst at the bar. I shall here introduce a few of them, and then conclude this sketch of their author.

#### TO A LADY,

On expressing her opinion that men could obtain the object of their love more easily than women.

Think not that men alone, my fair,  
Have power their passion to declare;  
Or that your sex, whate'er they feel,  
Must with a modest pride conceal.

If Love so partially is kind,  
I'll doubt not if the God be blind.  
But this, by Heaven! can ne'er be true:  
For if he's partial, 'tis to you.

Woman, with livelier feelings warmed,  
In nature's loveliest mould is formed;  
Each trait that animates her face  
Possesses such attractive grace,  
That whoso looks, that self-same hour  
Must own Love's all-subduing power.

Since youths there are whom trembling fear  
Forbids the voice of Hope to hear,  
(And who but Hope, 'mid powers above,  
Can guide the half-fledged wings of Love?)

If *such* a youth be e'er so blest  
 Unconsciously to fire her breast—  
 Is not a look, a look alone,  
 Enough to make her passion known?  
 Nay—if she check the rising sigh,  
 And quench the lightning of her eye,  
 The dawn of passion still will break,  
 And kindle blushes in her cheek.

What if a veil those blushes hide?  
 Has nature other aids denied?  
 No—sympathy, with mystic spell,  
 Can still th' impassioned secret tell;  
 Whilst every ear, by magic bound,  
 Heeds not, save one, th' enchanting sound.

Mark, too, my fair, night's lovely queen  
 Exerts her wondrous powers unseen;  
 And, through the heavens as slow she glides,  
 Directs old Ocean's ample tides,  
 That sink or swell at her command,  
 To guard and bless our native land.

So, Beauty! on its sea-girt shores,  
 Such powers, such secret powers are yours.  
 Your peerless charms with fond control,  
 Direct each passion of the soul;  
 The dullest heart with transport fill,  
 And wake it with Love's rapturous thrill.

*Temple, 1805.*

#### AN APOLOGY TO A LADY,

Who had been informed by another, to whom it was communicated in confidence, that the author had characterized her as one who possessed good *natural* sense, but could not boast of a *cultivated* understanding.

The painter, whose enthusiast breast  
 With nature's beauties is impressed,  
 Seeks not the garden's narrow round  
 Where art with studied step is found,  
 Who leads you to the trim alcove,  
 The marbled spring, and vistaed grove.

Ah ! no—He loves the rude-formed bower,  
 The shepherd's shelter from the shower,  
 The weeping rill and wild cascade  
 That pours its fury through the glade ;  
 And through the forest's sylvan reign,  
 Views the blue hills or spreading main.

So, to his mistress' rapturous praise,  
 The poet, when he tunes his lays,  
 Sings not the wisdom of her tongue,  
 But how with feeling grace she sung ;  
 Not that she conned the pedant's rules,  
 Or owned the logic of the schools,  
 But how her artless lips impart  
 Th' untutored dictates of her heart.

1806.

#### APOLOGY TO MY SISTER,

Who had informed another that I had not ventured to take my little niece  
 in my arms, then about four months old.

When gemmed by morn's refreshing dew,  
 The rose-bud opes its charms to view,  
 What hand profane in evil hour  
 Would dare to pluck the infant flower ?  
 For sure it owns a sweeter bloom,  
 Breathes to the gale more rich perfume,  
 And blushes with a deeper red,  
 When ripening in its native bed.

When with a brother's joy I see  
 Thy lovely babe, so loved by thee,  
 Blushing with all her mother's charms,  
 I fear to take her to my arms ;  
 For, in her smile her joy expressed,  
 She's lovelier on her mother's breast.

1806.

#### TO A LADY,

Who differed in opinion with the author, by preferring the violet to the rose.

Yes ! more than every flower that blows,  
 Sweet maid ! 'tis true, I love the rose :

For when its blushing charms I see,  
I sigh, and fondly think of thee.

Thy cheek displays as soft a bloom,  
Thy lips exhale as rich perfume ;  
And when it waves with graceful ease,  
Fanned by the pinions of the breeze,  
Methinks I see thee, see thee move,  
Attended by the train of love.

But thou—the flower that shrinks from view,—  
Thou lov'st the violet's pallid hue.  
If e'er this pale, this lowly flower,  
Crushed to the ground by some rude shower,  
Sweet maid ! thy pitying eye should see,  
Oh, give one sigh, one thought to me !

1806.

#### TO A LADY,

On having accompanied her to Penshurst.

Doubtless, sweet maid ! in Penshurst groves,  
Where gallant Sydney sang his loves,  
And taught Arcadia's nymphs and swains  
To weave the dance on British plains ;  
Where Waller on the page of fame  
Inscribed his Sacharissa's name ;  
Ah, yes !—in these sweet scenes to rove,  
Must wake the youthful breast to love ;  
And teach it, in poetic strains,  
To breathe a lover's joys and pains.

But, to what spot soe'er, by Heaven,  
To roam with thee, the bliss is given ;  
Whether at morn in sunny glades ;  
At noon in solitary shades ;  
Or mid gay Pleasure's noisy train,  
Molesting midnight's silent reign ;  
My breast thy converse would inspire,  
And fill it with a poet's fire.

1806.

## TO THE SAME,

On having chosen for an inscription "L'Amitié est l'Amour sans altes."

You say, sweet maid ! some poet truly sings  
*Friendship is Love*—but Love without his wings.  
 Since 'tis my hapless lot, with sorrowing heart,  
 From thee, ere long, my lovely friend ! to part ;  
 Too soon, I fear, that sorrowing heart will prove  
 Friendship has wings as swift as those of Love.

Yet Love and Friendship are, 'tis true, the same,  
 Or, if they differ, differ but in name.  
 Friendship is Love, when Reason's hand unties  
 The silken bands that blind his laughing eyes ;  
 Friendship is Love, without his torch, whose fire  
 Is kindled at the shrine of fond desire ;  
 Friendship is Love, when blunted is his dart,  
 That only *strikes*, but never *wounds* the heart.

1806.

## TO A LADY

Playing on the Harp.

Fair as the fairest of the choir  
 That hymn before th' Almighty Sire,  
 And draw the rolling orbs above  
 To listen to their harps of love ;  
 When, light as Zephyr's sportive wings,  
 Thy flying fingers sweep the strings,  
 The chords, that twine my heart around,  
 All vibrate to the rapturous sound.

Oh ! could they, at this happy hour,  
*Speak* what they feel, with equal power ;  
 These artless lines, that fail to move,  
 Alas ! thy pity or thy love,  
 Were worthy to be sung by thee,  
 And married to thy minstrelsy.

1806.



## TO A LADY,

On the opening of a Rose-bud.

I wonder not the budding rose  
Whilst on your breast, to perfect bloom  
Its infant petals should disclose,  
And shed, fair maid ! more rich perfume.

For there it found a warmer bed,  
Sunned by the radiance of your eyes ;  
Stole from your lips a deeper red,  
And drank more fragrance from your sighs.

But when you mark with pitying eye  
No more its drooping head it rears ;  
Ah ! better far that it should die,  
Than e'er be watered with your tears.

1809.

## TO A LADY,

Who requested the author to burn her Letters.

The rose, thy short-lived gift, my fair !  
Long mid my secret tablets pressed,  
Though withered, still I guard with care—  
And why?—It once adorned thy breast.

Then think not to the flames I'll give  
(Though to deny thee be a sin)  
Thy dearer written leaves, where live  
The feelings of the heart within.

1809.

## TO MRS. S——.

Blest in a husband's mutual love,  
You bid me a like blessing prove ;  
And kindly promise to commend  
To some fair maid your grateful friend :  
But first you bid me to declare  
What charms I wish my bride to share.

Know then, her stature, high or low,  
 Should grace in every motion show.  
 Her forehead, be it fair or brown,  
 Ne'er but at vice should wear a frown.  
 Her eyes, or black, or blue, or grey,  
 Should pour the intellectual ray.  
 Her cheek, or pale, or rosy red,  
 With modest blushes should be spread.  
 With smiling lips she must impart  
 Nought but the dictates of her heart.  
 She must not, light or dark her hair,  
 Refuse a lock for me to wear.  
 In fine—if like *yourself* she prove,  
 She'll crown the fondest wish of love.

#### TO A LADY,

On a Rose dropping from her bosom.

Whilst 'twas my happy lot last eve,  
 With you, my fair, the dance to weave,  
 The silver rose, with punished pride,  
 (For vainly with your breast it vied,)  
 Fell from that breast, its envied seat,  
 A prostrate suppliant at my feet.  
 Pitying, I raised it from the ground,  
 But felt indignant when I found  
 That all its charms to art were due ;  
 From whom its very breath it drew.

Oh ! then, forgive, if I forbear  
 Again, sweet maid ! to place it there—  
 There, where no empire art should gain,  
 Nor aught but native candour reign.

#### TO T. I. MATHIAS, ESQ.

To share thy converse in this blest retreat,  
 The Arts' loved temple, and the Muses' seat ;  
 To view the Tuscan pencil's magic powers,  
 That shows fair Venus in her secret bowers,<sup>8</sup>  
 Or claiming from the Phrygian boy the prize,<sup>8</sup>  
 Whilst envy flashes from her rival's eyes ;

<sup>8</sup> Alluding to two pictures by Italian masters in his possession.

I e'en could fancy that I trod the ground  
 For arms, for arts, for poesy renowned ;  
 And that the Thames, as roll its waves along<sup>9</sup>  
 Thy flow'ry banks, was Arno, famed in song ;  
 Were not Augusta's boast a nobler tide  
 Than all the streams that through Italia glide.

So, when with wond'ring rapture I peruse  
 Thy verse, a homage to the Tuscan muse,  
 I ne'er could deem it but the tuneful lays  
 Of him, sweet bard ! who sang his Laura's praise,  
 Did not thy strains a nobler rage command,  
 Fired by thy native tongue, free as thy native land.

#### IMPROMPTU TO MRS. OPIE,

On her saying she had never, till that evening, heard the author's name.

Ah ! vain delusion—as a poet  
 To think I shared some little fame,  
 Yet find not e'en the *musés* know it,  
 For Opie never heard my name.

#### TO A LADY,

On her presenting the author with a couple of purses ; one of which she said  
 might serve for a card-purse.

Since ne'er at cards, or luck, or skill,  
 With others' wealth my purse shall fill ;  
 And *one* might, to an envious spirit,  
 Seem more than what I need or merit ;  
 Know, lovely maid ! that *either* purse  
 May prove a *blessing*, not a *curse*,  
 (For justly is the wretch accused,  
 By whom Heaven's gifts are wrongly used,)  
*One* I'll to Industry consign ;  
 For only what I *gain* is *mine* ;  
 The *other* Charity shall hold ;  
 To bless the poor, the sick, the old,

<sup>9</sup> His house, in Scotland-yard, Westminster, had a most delightful view of the Thames.

And thus I'll think the donor fair  
 Scorns not my honest toils to share,  
 And joins me in such deeds of love  
 As claim the aid of Heaven above.

LINES ON THE JUBILEE, 1809.

Whilst mid the night that shadows half the world,  
 From untracked orbits meteor stars are hurled ;  
 O'er hapless Gallia, haughty mid her woes,  
 Whilst the fell comet, red with fury, glows ;  
 Thy planet, GEORGE ! with calm but steady force,  
 Rolls through serener skies its lengthened course :  
 And, by her guardian Genius firmly led,  
 Shall long o'er Albion happiest influence shed.

Time, in his endless circle, where, for signs,  
 Each solar zodiac, ranged as annals, shines,  
 Bends back, and points to seven sabbatic spheres,  
 That mark the gradual lapse of grateful years,  
 Since a loved monarch graced a splendid throne,  
 And ruled a people justly called his own.

Joy, too, descends from Heaven on seraph wing,  
 And bids whole nations wake the choral string ;  
 In grateful concert to resound his praise,  
 As full of virtues, as he's full of days.  
 Long may he reign ! kind Heaven's peculiar care ;  
 A boon conceded to his country's prayer ;  
 Till, deathless still to honour and renown,  
 He quits an earthly for a heavenly crown.

TO A LADY,

Who insisted that the author should give her his reasons for not playing at cards.

First, then, I fear (I own 'tis true)  
 When for my Sociate's *heart* I sue,  
 Like Omphale<sup>1</sup> of old renown,  
 She'll raise her *club*, and knock me down.

<sup>1</sup> The Lydian queen, dressed in her lover's lion's skin, and armed with his club, is said to have kept Hercules in due subjection to a government, now well known, but which then perhaps had not received a name.

Nor e'er my anger can I smother  
 To see, perhaps, some worthless other  
 That *heart* I hold above all price  
 Win with a *diamond* in a trice.  
 Rather than this, I'd yield my breath,  
 And supplicate the *spade* of death,  
 Me from such torturing pangs to save  
 As gamesters know, to dig my grave—  
 Where *kings* and *queens* (for all must die)  
 And *knaves* and fools together lie.

### TO A LADY,

Who procured some wine for the author at a crowded supper, by requesting  
 it for herself.

As with a bolder wing, the bird of Jove  
 Bears the red lightning through the realms above,  
 When seated with the rich nectareous tide,  
 By Hebe, from the golden vase supplied.

So, when from thee, than Hebe's self more fair,  
 'Tis mine the cup, thy lips have kissed, to share,  
 Warmed by the draught, my muse should wing her flight,  
 And strive to win Parnassus' loftiest height,  
 And thence, sweet maid ! in never dying lays,  
 Recount thy beauties, and resound thy praise :  
 But no ! she dares not hope, with feeble wing,  
 To brush the spray from famed Castalia's spring.

Since vain the contest with the bird of Jove,  
 Oh, may she rival Cytherea's dove !  
 Content to soar, though still with conscious dread,  
 In giddy circles o'er thy rose-crowned head ;  
 In hopes thy pitying lips will bid her rest  
 With trembling pinions on thy downy breast.

*Temple, 1806.*

## TO A LADY,

On altering for the author a pair of legal into clerical bands.

The breast-plate that on Aaron shone,  
 Begemmed with many a mystic stone,  
 Could by its varying rays declare  
 If God had heard the suppliant's prayer.

Now, when the law's high pomp is o'er,  
 And all her splendours are no more ;  
 The Gospel's humbler heart's expressed,  
 By lowly bands and simple vest.

Since then, sweet maid ! thy skilful hands  
 Have clipped the *lawyer's* ampler bands,  
 To suit the *deacon's* humbler guise ;  
 Oh ! may they prove to wondering eyes  
 I've quenched ambition's meteor fire,  
 Nor glow with fame or wealth's desire,  
 And, spurning all the pride of art,  
 May soft persuasion from the heart  
 Inspire my tongue, by praise or blame,  
 To rouse devotion's purer flame !

1811.

## TO A LADY.

Sir Sydney Smith, who, together with the author, was on a visit with a friend at Hampton, in order to give us an idea of the Oriental costume, bound a shawl round the head of the young lady to whom these lines are addressed, in the form of a turban ; and, saying that it only remained for him to apply a little rouge to her cheek, saluted her.

Blush not, sweet maid ! around thy head  
 When Albion's boast and Gallia's dread—  
 Whose looks alone from Acre's wall  
 Could e'en her proudest chief appal,—  
 With conquering hand the fillet winds  
 Around thy brow the turban binds,  
 And steals his fair reward—a kiss :  
 For who would rob him of the bliss ?

No—greet him with thy country's vows,  
 Weave laurel for the victor's brows,  
 And if he smile upon thy charms,  
 Blush not to clasp him in thine arms.  
 For who so justly claims to prove  
 The ardour of his country's love?  
 And who that ardour can declare  
 So well, so warmly, as the fair?<sup>2</sup>

## SONG.

Ah ! credit not the rival swain,  
 Who whispers in thy jealous ear  
 That other maids my vows obtain,  
 And calls my passion insincere.  
 I own, dear maid ! I love to seek  
 The plain where sport the virgin choir ;  
 And oft the form, the blushing cheek,  
 The charms of many a fair, admire.

<sup>2</sup> To the above little poem is attached the following note :—

"I hope," says Mr. Bray, "I may be pardoned for mentioning the following circumstance, as it is intimately connected with the preceding verses :—Sir Sydney Smith, who was on the point of taking leave of the company, requested to have a copy of what he was pleased to call his *charter* ; and the lady, on my promising to give her another, presented him with the original. On fulfilling my promise, she put it in her bosom ; and afterwards we made a morning's excursion, in my friend's barouche, to Richmond. On our return, however, she lamented that she had lost it, and petitioned for another copy. I soon supplied her loss ; and, on speculating as to what might become of the Sibyl's leaf, I felt some consolation in reflecting, that though the person who might find it would easily discover that it alluded to Sir Sydney, he would be unable to divine to whom it was addressed. Immediately on leaving Hampton, I set off with a friend on a tour through South Wales ; and was not a little surprised when he told me that a few days before he had dined with a party at Richmond ; and on the health of Sir Sydney, with that of other public characters, being drunk at table, a gentleman who was present said that his son, a little boy, whilst at play, had lately found a copy of verses respecting him, which he produced. My friend said he was convinced he knew the author ; and, taking one of my letters relative to our intended journey from his pocket, asked him if he did not recognise the writing."

But, though each love-inspiring dame  
Mine eye with earnest gaze surveys,  
Ah ! cease, my love ! thy swain to blame,  
Because he gives each beauty praise.

By blending every virgin's grace,  
A something like thyself I see ;  
For all the charms of every face  
Are surely, Rosa ! seen in thee.

## SONG.

Though, Delia, on the flow'ry mead,  
With thee the sportive dance I lead,  
View not the virgins with disdain  
Who for a partner sigh in vain.

Though oft with truth thou hear'st me swear  
Thine eyes are bright, thy face is fair ;  
Oh ! think not Love has thrown his dart,  
And pierced for thee my thrilling heart.

For I from fair to fair resort,  
And pay to each my amorous court,  
In hopes at last a maid to find,  
The best, the fairest of her kind.

Thus from the hive the insect flies,  
And soars o'er flowers of thousand dyes :  
But when the sweetest strikes his view,  
He shuts its wings, and sips its dew.

## THE BOON OF POVERTY.

Dear Lucy ! in autumn's bright morn,  
Ne'er paused you, with wonder, to view,  
Outstretched on the sprays of the thorn,  
The spider's long thread strung with dew?  
In the sunbeams, the drops' varied dyes  
Surpass the gay tints of each flower,  
And rival the bow in the skies,  
That crowns the moist brow of the shower.



The Fairies, who dance on the mead,  
Illumed by the moonbeams' soft light,  
Can harden each drop to a bead  
Than crystal more lucid and bright.  
The string as a necklace they wear ;  
(For of dress, like us mortals, they're proud)  
Or weave it in wreaths with their hair ;  
Where it shines, like the stars through a cloud.

Alas ! no such art is my share,  
Rich diamonds of dew-drops to make :  
To me fortune's gifts are but spare ;  
Yet Lucy these gifts may partake.  
Round your brows, oh ! but grant me to tie  
These mountain-ash berries so red ;  
More lovely they'd seem to mine eye  
Than pearls on an empress's head.

I have already mentioned that Sir Sydney Smith was a frequent visitor at the villa of Mr. Bray's friend at Hampton, on the banks of the Thames, and I must not omit that during these visits Sir Sydney told many anecdotes of his being confined in the Temple at Paris. Whilst a prisoner there, he carried on some secret communication with his friends, who were desirous of assisting his escape. Sometimes by blowing a particular air on the flute, they were given to understand that they were to work, or not to work, in a subterranean passage which they were forming for his liberation, as their labours demanded the utmost circumspection, lest they should be overheard by their enemies. Sir Sydney, when permitted to be in the court-yard of the prison for exercise, occasionally amused himself with a game of balls, somewhat similar to that of fives. His aim was to keep up as many as he could ; and when the eye of the sentinel was elsewhere engaged, to glance one of the balls, in which was concealed a paper of instructions, over

the wall to his friends. The governor, who was his keeper, had so firm a confidence in his honour that, when he was obliged to leave the Temple, he would most earnestly beseech Sir Sydney to be on his parole; and if he consented would, during his absence, give him full liberty to range within the walls of his prison. But if, through caprice or design, Sir Sydney did not agree to pass his word (and he not unfrequently refused it), the governor seemed greatly disconcerted, and he had reason to believe now and then remained on purpose to watch, instead of following his intention of quitting guard for awhile.

To return to the subject. Though for five years Mr. Bray went the Western Circuit, and bore a very fair reputation in his vocation, yet he never liked the law as a profession; and never could overcome his timidity as a barrister. This was put to a singular trial in the very first witness he had to examine in the court at Exeter; for she proved to be one of his father's old servants; and he had a very painful duty to perform in his professional capacity, in preventing her from criminating her husband.

During the circuits he formed many pleasant acquaintances; and one of his legal companions and friends in these circuits, who was once also a guest at his father's in Tavistock, was the late Speaker of the House of Commons, the Honourable Sir Charles Manners Sutton.<sup>3</sup> For the public principles and integrity of this gentleman Mr. Bray always entertained the utmost respect and esteem; and the days he passed with him in their professional career he numbers now as amongst the most agreeable recollections of his youth.

<sup>3</sup> The late Lord Canterbury.

I have been told by my husband's old legal friends, that among them he obtained the name of the *Cas-tilian*, on account of the high feelings of honour he invariably observed in his profession. From mistrust in his own powers, he may be said to have avoided a brief as much as others sought one.

Nevertheless, it is but justice due to him to say that in three cases of more than ordinary import, though each differing in its nature from the other, he gave the fullest satisfaction ; these cases related, first, to an opinion on a will, in which the right to some very considerable property was involved ; secondly, to a consultation ; and thirdly, to an award. The consultation was held at Mr. Garrow's chambers, where my husband, as a young man, listened with great attention, but did not venture to offer any remarks ; but on his return with one of the barristers, who was his most intimate friend, he said that he could not reconcile himself to the conclusion they had come to, as it was at variance with a case which he then mentioned ; and pointed out what he thought would be the right course. His friend naturally enough asked him why he did not mention it at the time ; and said he should instantly, on reaching his chambers, write to Mr. Garrow on the subject, and tell him to whom he was indebted for the opinion, which would probably alter the whole aspect of the case ; as indeed it did.

My husband's opinion on the doubtful point of the will was confirmed by the highest authority ; and the award, very unusual in such cases, gave satisfaction to both parties.

But however much respected he might be as a barrister, yet such was his aversion to the courts of

law, that I have heard him say he never put on a wig and gown to attend Westminster Hall without a painful disturbance of the nerves. And that extreme degree of timidity, which he could never overcome, frequently made him remain silent, or rendered his expressions confused, when he knew his own views to be right respecting the subject in discussion. Yet, when his feelings were strongly interested or excited, he was fully the master of himself; and in such moments, I have been assured by those who have heard him in court, he both commanded and fixed attention in a very remarkable degree.

His own inclinations, however, were always turned on the Church; and even whilst in the Temple he studied sedulously those old divines in whose works he so much delighted. In town he also attended the lectures of Dr. Porteus, Bishop of London; and gave the heads of every lecture, in a series of letters, to a friend in the country; who, not long since, assured me he had for many years carefully preserved them, till he lent them to some clergyman in Cornwall, who took so great an interest in their perusal as never to return them.

Mr. Bray was not altogether unskilled in points of controversy even at this period; for Dr. Disney, the Unitarian minister, who had originally held preference in the Church, gave him the Unitarian and improved (as it is called) version of the New Testament, with a view to induce him to embrace his own sentiments; but so far was this from producing the effect, it confirmed him in his former opinions; and not content with refuting many of its principles in notes on the margin, he resolved more sedulously to study the scriptures themselves than he had ever done before;

and by the blessing of God he considers this was no small means of bringing him to the decision of entering the Church as a profession. The circumstance of his ordination was not a little remarkable: I shall here, therefore, relate it.

His fondness for Italian literature, as was before noticed, procured for him the acquaintance and friendship of Mr. Mathias. When he resolved to quit the bar for the Church, previous to executing his intention of going to one of the universities, he secluded himself from the society of his friends, in order to apply closely to the more direct study of theology.

It was necessary, however, for his health, that he should occasionally take exercise; and in one of his walks he accidentally met Mr. Mathias, who inquired what he had lately done with himself. Mr. Bray explained the object and motive of his seclusion.

On hearing this, Mr. Mathias was pleased to say that it was a pity a man of his abilities and acquirements should lose so much time in the mere form of keeping terms at a university; that he thought he could be of service to him; for though he had never asked a favour for himself in his life, yet he considered his friend so peculiarly circumstanced, that he would do it for him in this instance. He was, he added, well acquainted with two or three of the Bishops; he would mention Mr. Bray's case; and if one would not ordain him perhaps another might; as he knew, whatever might be the learning, or the general capabilities of the individual, that some had tied up their hands not to ordain any one who had not *previously* taken a degree.

Mr. Mathias, like a true friend, as he was, fulfilled

his word ; and Mr. Bray soon received a letter from him, stating that he had held some communication with the Bishop of Norwich, who said that if Mr. Mathias would bring his friend to him, and he found him competent to fill the office of the ministry, he was happy to say he had not tied up his hands, as some of his brother Bishops had done, and that he should be willing to ordain him ; for he had always considered that a person who entered the Church on choice, the result of mature reflection, would be more likely to be an honour to it than where he was destined to the sacred profession at an early age, merely to take advantage of the interest of friends.

Mr. Bray, on a personal acquaintance, had the good fortune fully to satisfy the Bishop. He afterwards, also, was received with great kindness at Norwich ; and, in consequence of the absence of the chaplain, was examined by the chancellor. He was ordained, in the ordinary course, in the cathedral of that city.

Soon after this event he proceeded to Tavistock, on a visit to his father and mother. He had scarcely been there a few weeks, when the Rev. Richard Sleeman, Vicar of Tavistock, and perpetual curate of Brent Tor, died. At this time Mr. Adam (now Baron Adam, and Lord High Commissioner of Scotland) was on a visit at the house of my husband's father. This gentleman very kindly seconded Mr. Bray, sen., in his application to his Grace the Duke of Bedford, who immediately named the object of their solicitude to the vacant preferment, in the year 1811. Thus, after so many changes of fortune, Mr. Bray found himself at last in his native town, with his nearest and dearest friends, in the neighbourhood of his favourite

Dartmoor; and established as a minister in that Church on which he had always fixed his desires and his hopes. Most thankful has he ever felt for the blessing so peculiarly, though so late, conferred on him in his choice of a profession. He was indeed most forcibly reminded of the vicissitudes of his life when, on going to Brent Tor, the first time he ever did duty, he met in his way thither one of his old artillerymen, who very cordially saluted him with "How do you do, *Captain?*" adding the old proverb, "Once a captain, always a captain."

Not unmindful of his former pursuits, even in a new profession, Mr. Bray still bore in mind his wish one day to give some account of his native town and its vicinity. For this purpose he kept a slight journal of his excursions, and made many pencil sketches during his walks and rides; whilst the first year that he was Rural Dean, he made a drawing of every church he visited; in some instances combining the landscape with the building. This series much interested Mr. Stothard, the historical painter, to whom they were shown in London; and who said, that if engraved, they would make a very good work, as picturesque examples of the architecture which chiefly prevailed in this part of England.

Of Mr. Bray's life as a clergyman I must not speak; since, in giving him a place, which I could not omit without the greatest injustice, in the biography of his native town, it has been my aim to state a few facts connected with him as simply as possible, withholding all commendation of my own, that I might not even seem to name them with the slightest degree of favourable prejudice or partiality. The friends he has found and preserved through life, and the respect and

affection of the worthy, both rich and poor, in his own parish, are all I ask to speak his praise ; he does not need mine.

I must, however, add that, diffident of his own powers, and anxious that his flock should have the benefit of those old divines from whose stores he had himself derived so much knowledge and instruction, he determined to commence his career, not by giving them his own crude compositions, nor yet mere transcriptions from others, however excellent they might be : for some years, therefore, he compressed and modernized a vast number of those old and sterling writers whose works, though known but to students, will ever remain as monuments of honour to the Church, and to the country that gave them birth. Delighted with this pursuit, he determined to go still farther, and both studied and translated in a manner capable of being delivered from the pulpit, the most eloquent and orthodox portions of the Greek and Latin Fathers.

Of original sermons Mr. Bray wrote a very considerable collection ; though he did not venture on the composition of these till he had long studied in the school of those great examples above mentioned. He has published, besides the poems already alluded to, 'Sermons selected from the Works of the most eminent Divines of the Sixteenth, Seventeenth, and Eighteenth Centuries ; abridged, and rendered in a modern and appropriate style.'

'Discourses adapted to the Pulpit, or to the use of Families, from Tracts and Treatises of eminent Divines.'

'Select Sermons of the Right Reverend Thomas Wilson, D.D., Bishop of Sodor and Man : abridged,



and rendered in a familiar but less colloquial style.'

'Lyric Hymns,' printed (not published) 1820.

The following songs printed (not published) in 1821:—'Idyls,' part the first; 'Funeral Ode on the Death of Lord Nelson.'

'Discourses on Protestantism, as a Fundamental and Pervading Principle in Church and State.'

These last named sermons are original; they were delivered by Mr. Bray in the church of Tavistock, in the year 1829, and published at the request of many of his most respectable parishioners.

'A Sermon, preached at the Visitation of the Ven. the Archdeacon of Totnes, in the Parish Church of Tavistock, on Thursday, June 20th, 1833, and printed at the request of some of the clergy present.'

I ought to have mentioned that Mr. Bray contributed to the *Classical Journal* some papers on the Classic Metres; and to another periodical, whose name I have forgotten, some communications on the Italian Sonnet.

At the particular request of his Grace the Duke of Bedford, my husband took on himself, though much against his own inclinations, the duties of a magistrate, in the year 1812, and served in this capacity for more than twenty years.

In 1822, after keeping the regular terms, &c., as a ten years' man, Mr. Bray took his degree as Bachelor of Divinity of Trinity College, Cambridge.

I shall conclude this account of my husband with a slight mention of his *Lyric Hymns*, "printed, but never in any way advertised, nor circulated, excepting amongst friends, in the year 1820. Of these poems (to which, from the greater variety of metre

than is usual in such compositions, it is presumed that music might more easily be adapted) those marked with an asterisk in the table of contents, were, he tells us in the preface, suggested by passages in the works of some old divines." The following paragraph I also venture to extract from the preface to this, my favourite little volume:—"He may be excused, perhaps, for adding that the first three hymns are contained in a volume of poems published by the author in 1799; and that *the whole* were sent to a London bookseller in 1817, but, owing to various circumstances, were not then printed. And this he more particularly mentions, lest he might be supposed to have borrowed the hymn entitled *Life*, from a passage in *Human Life*, a poem published by Mr. Rogers in 1819. He hopes therefore to be pardoned, in the present instance, by referring to Bossuet<sup>4</sup> for the *subject* of the hymn in question."

As a proof, however, that when borrowing a subject from a prose writer, as a hint for verse, Mr. Bray is no servile translator, I shall give, at full length, his hymn of *Life*.

### LYRIC HYMNS.

#### LIFE.

Life's like a road whose farthest bound  
Ends in a precipice profound,  
And, ere its unknown length we range,  
The danger we're forewarned to heed.  
But, such the law that knows no change,  
We may not pause, we *must* proceed.  
Fain would we backward turn with fear,  
But "Forward! Forward!" meets our ear.

<sup>4</sup> *Abrégé d'un Sermon prêché à Meaux le jour de Pâques.* Phil. iv. 4.

Unseen, but not unfelt, a hand,  
Not all our efforts can withstand,  
Now drags us up some rocky steep, .  
    To gaze the dizzy scene below;  
Now, in some valley's shadowy deep,  
    Urges the viewless path of woe.  
"Let rest our weary limbs restore!"  
No—"Forward!" thunders as before.

Yet, to console us, still remains  
Some short-lived pleasure 'mid our pains.  
Glittering with morning's orient beam,  
    Here laugh the dew-besprinkled flowers;  
There winds, through groves, the murmuring stream,  
    Whilst birds flit warbling 'mid their bowers.  
"Oh! sure we here awhile may stay!"  
Ah! no—'tis "Forward! haste! away!"

But see, behind, where'er we pass,  
Falls with dread crash the crumbling mass.  
And yet, because 'tis ours to wear  
    A fading garland wove in haste,  
Because some tempting fruits we share,  
    Short though their savour to the taste;  
In mirth a few-charmed hours we spend,  
Nor heed to what our footsteps tend.

Still hurried on 'mid fancied bliss,  
Our steps approach the dread abyss.  
And now, alas! how changed the scene!  
    The birds are mute within their bowers,  
The streams less clear, the meads less green,  
    Less sweet the fruits, less fresh the flowers.  
Death hovers o'er the gulf, and Fear:  
And now we feel that we are near.

A step, and we are on the brink:  
"Forward!" Ah! yes, 'tis vain to shrink.  
Horror through all our senses flies;  
    A dizzy vapour loads our head,  
And presses on our straining eyes.  
    'Tis vain our backward path to tread;  
The path itself is now no more—  
All fall'n and vanished—all is o'er!

## THE SUN.

Mark how the subject flowers obey  
The motions of the orb of day;  
As though they could, or would, not flourish  
Without his beams their life to nourish:  
They shut, at eve, each dewy leaf,  
And hang their heads all pale with grief.

But, soon as orient morning glows,  
We see each leaf its folds unclose,  
Though still in part its charms disguising,  
As though to hail its welcome rising.  
Whilst, for his noontide blessing shed,  
Those grateful charms are wide disspread.

Thus, Lord! but turn thy face away,  
The heart to sorrow falls a prey;  
Whilst, in thy presence, without measure  
Flows the full flood of heavenly pleasure.  
Oh! be it mine the world to shun,  
Of every carnal heart the sun.

When *that* or gives or hides its beams,  
Its joys or sorrows are but dreams:  
Yes, vain are *those* your heart to cherish,  
And yield to *these*, for aye you perish;  
Whilst, Sun of Righteousness! thy ray  
Guides us to Life's eternal day.

## CHOICE OF SEASONS.

When comes the stork from distant climes?  
When, but at her appointed times?  
Unruled by compass or by chart,  
Borne on the pinions of the breeze,  
For foreign realms, o'er trackless seas,  
Swallows at their fixed hour depart.

And who the nightingale, sweet bird !  
 E'er 'mid the heats of harvest heard ?  
 Or screaming bittern call her brood,  
     When wintry tempests scour the sky ?  
     Close in their cells e'en silkworms lie  
 Till burst the mulberry buds, their food.

Thou, Lord ! appointed times hast given  
 To every purpose under heaven.  
 E'en acts indifferent, timely done,  
     To good may by thy blessing turn :  
     And e'en what's lawful we may mourn,  
 If but untimely 'twas begun.

But virtue, piety, and grace,  
 Can ne'er be out of time or place.  
 Oh ! whilst my heart is filled with Thee,  
     Be mine on earth my voice to raise  
     In loud hosannas to thy praise,  
 Nor cease but with eternity.

“USE THIS WORLD AS NOT ABUSING IT.”

Some from the world to wilds have flown,  
 To fix their thoughts on God alone ;  
 But, ah ! too late, *themselves*, they find,  
 They left, e'en as the *world*, behind.

What mortal eye, with constant gaze,  
 Can dare the sun's meridian blaze ?  
 If God were ever in our sight,  
 'Twould blind us with excess of light.

From heavenly thoughts a timely rest  
 Endears them with a double zest :  
 Nay, earthly blessings, by thy care,  
 'Tis ours, O God ! with joy to share.

Yet earth's best joys I'd little prize,  
 If long they took me from thine eyes :  
 Oh ! be it mine, through them, to view,  
 And, in them, to enjoy thee too.

## GROWTH IN GRACE.

We form our wishes, and fulfil  
(Such our vain boast!) the self-same hour :  
Whilst God, who needs but speak his will,  
Takes time to execute his power.

The gard'ner sows the rarest seed,  
That slow its tender leaves unfolds ;  
And, scarce distinguished from a weed,  
The eye the future flower beholds.

At length, matured by suns and showers,  
By spring's cold blasts and summer's heats,  
She peers above her rival flowers,  
Vanquished by her superior sweets.

Can I, then, hope the seeds of grace,  
That in my heart have fixed their root,  
(So poor the soil, so close the space)  
With instant growth shall yield their fruit?

Be as thou wilt thy blessings given ;  
Gladly, O God! I wait thy leisure :  
So that thou bring my soul to heaven,  
The way, the hour, be at thy pleasure.

## THE CONDEMNED CRIMINAL.

Just and righteous is my sentence ;  
Certain death awaits my crime :  
Gracious God! be mine repentance  
Whilst I've still the gift of time.  
For, as man his life has ended,  
So is fixed his final doom :  
Justice, here with mercy blended,  
Flows unmixed beyond the tomb.

My body is my real prison ;  
My sins, ah! they're my real chains ;  
Thou that from the grave art risen,  
Thou alone canst ease my pains ;

Thou, a sinful world redeeming,  
Oh! for me the ransom pay;  
And thy blood, in mercy streaming,  
Wash each deadly stain away.

But, thy fears, ah! why dissemble,  
Why, my soul! so near the grave,  
When the good, though aided, tremble  
'Mid their work themselves to save?  
Jesus! so I 'scape perdition,  
Let me thy full vengeance share;  
Tortured now with just contrition,  
Bid thy hand hereafter spare.

#### UNCERTAINTY OF LIFE.

Through eve's thick shades that veil the sky,  
No moon, no star can dart its rays:  
But still the Lord's all-seeing eye  
Our every thought and deed surveys.

Our limbs from labour to repose,  
We welcome the return of night;  
Though vain our hopes and fears, who knows  
If e'er we hail to-morrow's light?

To God, then, let us humbly pray,  
That we each fleeting hour may spend  
As if, with the decline of day,  
Our lives should likewise have an end.

#### DIVINE POWER.

"Be light!"—Light was: no sooner heard  
Than done, O God, thy sovereign word.  
Chaos, 'mid his wild commotion,  
Hushed to peace, thy will obeyed;  
Within his limits sunk the ocean,  
And earth her bulwarks round arrayed.

Oh! by thy mighty power control  
The raging tumults of my soul.  
Let not doubts my passions darken,  
Plunged in sin's o'erwhelming night :  
But bid them to thy mandates hearken,  
And walk by Truth's supernal light.

Then (thy grace alone can save  
The prey of Death and of the Grave),  
Rescued from those dread dominions,  
Where the gnawing worm ne'er dies,  
Shall angels bear me on their pinions  
Before thy throne above the skies.



## LETTER XXXVII.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

Mr. Edmund Pearse, Surgeon, of Tavistock—His Collection of Minerals  
—Specimens resembling the Pointed or Gothic Arch—Unique—  
Letter from Mr. Pearse on the Mines, and Anecdotes of Mining in  
the Neighbourhood.

*Vicarage, Tavistock, October 5th, 1835.*

I MUST now turn to another subject of considerable interest, and one that I have great pleasure in introducing to your notice—the minerals, and anecdotes connected with mining, of this neighbourhood. Mr. Edmund Pearse, surgeon, of Tavistock, has been kind enough to indulge me with a sight of his beautiful museum, for such it may be called, of native and local minerals. Amongst these are specimens of a singular formation, resembling the pointed or Gothic arch, with mathematical exactness; these minerals have only been found in one mine, and in this neighbourhood. All mineralogists have pronounced them to be unique. The following letter, which I doubt not will interest you as much as it has ourselves, is from the pen of Mr. Pearse:—

“TO MRS. BRAY.

*“Tavistock, October 2, 1835.*

“MADAM,—It would afford me pleasure to furnish you with a statement of such particulars as you

require relative to the mines and miners of our neighbourhood ; but the very limited stock of information I possess on the subject, and the fact of my not being versed either in mineralogy or geological science, renders me rather an incompetent person to supply the required materials. However, I will furnish you with a brief sketch of some facts which I have been able to collect at different periods, from my occasional intercourse with the miners and the mines in the immediate vicinity of Tavistock.

Dartmoor, it is well known, abounds with lodes of iron and tin ; several of the latter have at all periods been very productive, and many more are now likely to be worked by the Plymouth and Dartmoor Company with spirit and success. In one of these mines, near Moreton Hampstead, manganese and calcareous spar have been found inclosed in masses of solid granite at the depth of sixty fathoms ; a fact which ill accords with most of our popular geological theories. I have several specimens of this manganese in my own museum. The same mine also has produced some elegant specimens of variegated quartz, needle tin, red, yellow, black, and rose quartz ; also some splendid octohedral pseudomorphous crystals of a large size, sometimes inclosing a little water, but with no other vestige of the original formation, and no apparent outlet which might have given exit to the materials of the decomposed crystal, forming a beautiful subject for the speculations of the electro-chemical mineralogist.

“The stream-works, though less productive than the mines, are still, in many instances, a source of profit to the adventurer. Formerly some grains of gold were found in these streams, and it was not

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Dartmoor, it is well known, abounds with lodes of iron and tin; several of the latter have at all periods been very productive, and many more are now likely to be worked by the Plymouth and Dartmoor Company with spirit and success. In one of these mines, near Moreton Hampstead, manganese and calcareous spar have been found inclosed in masses of solid granite at the depth of sixty fathoms; a fact which ill accords with most of our popular geological theories. I have several specimens of this manganese in my own museum. The same mine also has produced some elegant specimens of variegated quartz, needle tin, red, yellow, black, and rose quartz; also some splendid octohedral pseudomorphous crystals of a large size, sometimes inclosing a little water, but with no other vestige of the original formation, and no apparent outlet which might have given exit to the materials of the decomposed crystal, forming a beautiful subject for the speculations of the electro-chemical mineralogist.

"The stream-works, though less productive than the mines, are still, in many instances, a source of profit to the adventurer. Formerly some grains of gold were found in these streams, and it was not



## LETTER XXXVII.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

Mr. Edmund Pearse, Surgeon, of Tavistock—His Collection of Minerals—Specimens resembling the Pointed or Gothic Arch—Unique—Letter from Mr. Pearse on the Mines, and Anecdotes of Mining in the Neighbourhood.

*Vicarage, Tavistock, October 5th, 1835.*

I MUST now turn to another subject of considerable interest, and one that I have great pleasure in introducing to your notice—the minerals, and anecdotes connected with mining, of this neighbourhood. Mr. Edmund Pearse, surgeon, of Tavistock, has been kind enough to indulge me with a sight of his beautiful museum, for such it may be called, of native and local minerals. Amongst these are specimens of a singular formation, resembling the pointed or Gothic arch, with mathematical exactness; these minerals have only been found in one mine, and in this neighbourhood. All mineralogists have pronounced them to be unique. The following letter, which I doubt not will interest you as much as it has ourselves, is from the pen of Mr. Pearse:—

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“The stream-works, though less productive than the mines, are still, in many instances, a source of profit to the adventurer. Formerly some grains of gold were found in these streams, and it was not

uncommon for the miner to carry in his pocket a quill in which to deposit them. In and about the old stream-works there are now to be seen several remains of the Phœnician smelting-houses, called by the miners Jews' Houses: from one of these, near the confluence of the East and West Dart, about three years since, there was taken tin ore, which was redressed and smelted at Crowndale, by the present Tavistock Smelting Company; and not far from this place there was found a block of Jews' tin, supposed to be the most ancient in existence, and now in the possession of a gentleman of this town. The surface of this block betrays marks of great antiquity, being much corroded by the influence of those external agents to which it has been exposed.

"I remember, about twelve years ago, to have seen a very old woodcut, which exhibited a whole pack of hounds harnessed and laden with little bags of tin, travelling over the mountains of Dartmoor; these animals being able to cross the deep bogs of the forest in situations where there were no roads, and where no other beasts of burden could pass. The old miners on the Moor are rather more superstitious than those residing in towns. The horseshoe is invariably affixed to some of the erections belonging to the mine to prevent witchcraft. The precise origin of this superstitious practice I am unable to learn; the only explanation I have heard given is, that the devil always travels in circles, and that he is consequently interrupted when he arrives at either of the heels of the shoe, and obliged to take a retrograde course.

"The miners have invariably a great horror and dread of whistling underground, believing it to be

very unlucky ; they regard it also as unlucky to work either on Midsummer, or New-Year's Day, or on the eves of these days ; and, formerly, all red-letter days were deemed sacred. On these occasions they also affix to the top of the principal engine, or building, a flag, or bush, which they call a *switch*—it is said that this was originally done to commemorate the opening of the tin trade with China.

“It is not uncommon in deep mines, where there are what the miners term *vugs*—or where there are large pseudomorphous crystallizations—to hear loud and frequent explosions, and that on occasions and in situations where no miners are at work : these noises the men believe to be occasioned by the working of the fairies, or pixies, whom they call *small men* ; but the true cause is the bursting open of some of these crystals, hollows, and vugs, where the air or gas had been confined under very high degrees of pressure.

“A miner of this town very lately broke into one of these hollows, of considerable size, of a grotto-like appearance, and richly studded with crystals of quartz and pyrites, which, by the light of his candle, had such a brilliant appearance as made the man say ‘he thought he was in heaven ;’ and being asked in what respect he thought it resembled heaven ?’ he replied, ‘It was so beautiful, he could compare it to nothing else than to a Jew's shop.’

“Huel Friendship, in the parish of Mary Tavy, has been for years, and is now, the richest copper-mine in this district : there has been lately erected on the mine a magnificent steam-engine, which in power may be ranked as the third in England. This mine has furnished for the cabinet of the mineralogist

specimens of chesel spar beautifully coloured with amethystine tints, tungstate of lime, slickensides, pavonites, and crystals of pyrites of various forms from the cube to the ekosihedron. I have a crystal of the latter description, whose planes are equilateral triangles highly polished, with bevelled edges.

"In the parish of Calstock, on the Cornish banks of the Tamar, Gunnislake Mine has been lately reopened by Capt. Thomas Teague and Co. A few years since, this mine of all others, was the most productive in specimens of uranite, malachite, arseniates, carbonates, sulphates, and native coppers; also plush copper, resembling the richest velvet—crimson, green, and blue. The Beer Mines are also again at work for silver and lead, and are likely to replenish the cabinets of the curious with tabular quartz, galena, variegated and multiformed fluors containing—water, particles of silver, iron, lead, titanium, pyrites, and copper. A polyhedral crystal of fluor from this mine is described by Phillips in his *Introduction to Mineralogy*, page 170, as bounded by 322 planes.

"The manganese mines in the neighbourhood of Brent Tor have furnished specimens of singular form and beauty; some perfect letters and figures, leaves, leaflets, and embossed arborescent forms.

"The Virtuous Lady Mine, situated on Roborough Down, in the parish of Buckland, immediately below the junction of the Walkham and Tavy, is the most celebrated mine in Devonshire for the variety and singularity of its cabinet specimens.

"Besides the brilliant, well-defined crystals of titanium, fish-scale iron, dodecahedral and cubic crystals of pyrites, milk and cream quartz, pavonites,

and tetrahedral crystals of copper, red, blue, purple, yellow and violet, it has produced specimens of copper which, when turned about under the rays of the sun, assume, or rather reflect, a different colour from every different angle of incidence—orange, gold, crimson, violet, green, &c. &c.

“The capped quartz from this mine is among the finest in the world. I have in my collection one specimen having upwards of thirty truncated crystals, every one of which will exhibit, when the cap is removed, corresponding apices to those of the caps.

“But the most modern, as well as the most inexplicable of the productions of this mine, are the Gothic arches of spathose iron, which were found in great abundance in the years 1832 and 1833. Some of these arches have been shown to different mineralogists, who have offered various hypotheses relative to their formation. By one they were said to be depositions of spathose iron upon some implements used by the miners of a very remote period. Another gave it as his opinion that they were formed in the same way by depositions on a vegetable production, such as the dock-leaf, and were placed in their present situation by some great convulsion of nature. The theory of their formation advanced by the miners themselves is just as good as either of the above, which is, that they were moulded by the soles of the shoes of the antediluvian miners, or the shoes and feet of the *small men*; that is, the fairies or pixies.

“Some of these arches are grooved round the edges; others are quite hollow, showing that they were moulded originally on some other substance of the arched form, which substance is in most instances



entirely removed, but in others some calcareous matter has been found. These arches are frequently found standing on, and having their hollows communicating with, a sort of cavern of a pseudomorphous cubic crystalline form, as if they once contained cubic crystals of fluor, or pyrites. In one of these caverns, in my possession, there is, as if precipitated at the bottom, a calcareous stalagmite, on which rests an isolated crystal of copper. About six fathoms from the situation of these arches and caverns, separated by solid rock, there were found a multitude of cubic crystals of pyrites of various magnitudes, well fitting the cubic hollows in the caverns above alluded to.<sup>1</sup> It is possible that at some distant period, in a great convulsion of nature, these cubes might have been shaken out of their shells, and removed six fathoms distant from them; but supposing this to have been the case, we still are as much as ever in the dark as to the formation of the lancet arch, which seems to have been produced with mathematical accuracy and precision. The truth is, we are not yet in possession of a sufficient number of facts to warrant our coming to any conclusion on the subject.

“When adverting above to the superstition of the miners, I had forgotten to relate a circumstance which occurred a few years since, near Roborough Rock. Three men were at work late on the Saturday night at the South Devon Wharf, when suddenly they saw issue from the rock a large ball of fire, which, with a rumbling noise, rolled on towards them, and in its approach assumed a variety of forms; sometimes

<sup>1</sup> There was raised one of the arches without a base, and elongated, forming a double arch, with a smaller one lying transversely across its middle. This *specimen is unique*.

that of a human figure, then of a church with arched windows, pillars, &c. &c. The men were dreadfully terrified, and calling to their recollection that the Sunday had commenced, they fully believed they saw and were pursued by the devil; and this continues to be their firm conviction.

"The fact is, that it is not very uncommon for inflammable gas to issue from the backs of lodes, which ignites as soon as it comes in contact with the oxygen of the atmosphere. The ground where these men were working is full of iron and tin lodes, and there can be no doubt but that their fears not only gave the name but also the form to the meteor.

"The superstition relative to the dowsing or divining-rod, and the dowsers themselves, is too well known to be noticed here. The only instance that I know of its having been used in Devonshire was at Sticklepath, near Okehampton, about six years since, where a dowser was brought up, at a considerable expense, from the west of Cornwall, by a set of adventurers, who, notwithstanding the favourable predictions of the dowser, have found their speculation an unprofitable adventure.

"I am, Madam,

"With respect,

"Your obedient servant,

"EDMUND PEARSE."

## LETTER XXXVIII.

TO ROBERT SOUTHEY, ESQ.

Some short account of the most striking Scenes and remarkable Places in the vicinity of the Town—Junction of the Rivers Tavy and Walkham—The Double Water—Grenofen—Raven Rock—The Valley—The Virtuous Lady—Minjature Alpine Bridge—Superstition respecting the River Tamar—Walreddon House—Mount Tavy—Rowdon Wood—An extraordinary Tempest, or Whirlwind, in Rowdon Wood, in 1768—Ride to Ward Bridge—Delightful Scenery—Wood Town—Spenser the Poet—Lines from his *Shepherd's Calendar*—View of Vixen Tor from the Field—The Pass, or entrance to the Moor—The Cursus—Spirit of a Horse—Ride to New Bridge—Magnificent Scenery—Morwell Rocks; their Beauty and Grandeur—Endsleigh Cottage—Blanchdown Woods—Denham Bridge—Village of Peter Tavy; its Beauty and Interest—The Coombe—Valley of Waterfalls—Brent Tor—Cudlipp Town—Mr. Bray's Manor in the parish of Tavistock—Mary Tavy Scenery—The Shellands—Story of a Bandit who lived in a Wood, and became the Terror of the Country round Dunterton—Some Account of the Abbots of Tavistock, by the Rev. G. Oliver, of Exeter—The Author takes leave of Mr. Southey—Conclusion.

*Vicarage, Tavistock, Sept. 24th, 1833.*

I AM aware there ought to be in these letters some account of the most remarkable places in our neighbourhood, in regard to the beauty of their scenery. But this is a subject on which I have little to say that would be new to you; having already, in *Fitzford*, attempted incidentally to describe all that is most striking around us. I have there spoken at large respecting Morwell Rocks, the vicinities of the Lum-

borne, the Tamar, and the Tavy, Lydford Waterfall, the glen, and the castle, the cave and mine of the Virtuous Lady, with the enchanting scenery by which it is surrounded, &c. Nor can I help thinking, notwithstanding you have been accustomed to the grandeur of mountain and lake scenes, that you would be struck with the exceeding beauty of our rocky rivers and our valleys. I can well believe that our loftiest hills would look as mole-hills, when compared to those of Cumberland ; but the forms of our tors, by which they are generally crowned, are of the most picturesque character, and so peculiar, that I question if any other county, except Cornwall, can boast similar granite pinnacles as the finish of their elevated points.

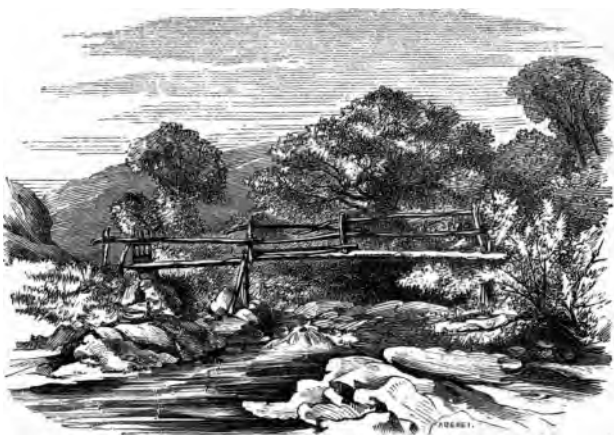
The junction of the rivers Tavy and Walkham, at a wild romantic spot called the *Double Water*, deserves notice. In its kind it is one of the most beautiful scenes I ever beheld : so, indeed, is the whole of the valley leading to the Double Water. Near the entrance from the Tavistock road is situated Grenofen, a house surrounded by delightful grounds, lawns, and trees. The Walkham winds in the most beautiful manner through the valley of Grenofen ; here rushing over masses of rock, there clear as crystal, showing every pebble in its bed, and forming at every turn little picturesque falls of water. Sometimes the stream is interrupted by larger masses, and is seen tumbling over them in a sheet of boiling foam ; whilst near, in many a deep hollow, it lies still and clear, reflecting like a mirror every object around. The adjacent hills are lofty, often abrupt ; here and there wooded or broken in their sides, presenting a surface of crag and cliff, partially covered with lichen

and ivy. In these recesses the ravens make their nests; and the rocks are frequently found of the wildest forms, such as Salvator himself would have chosen as a suitable scene for the haunts of his banditti. The noblest of these piles is called the *Raven Rock*; no doubt from the many birds of that tribe which harbour in it. This, when seen at twilight, with the river rolling and foaming but a few yards from its base, has an effect that acts powerfully on the imagination. In the days of superstition I can well believe it might have been deemed the haunt of pixies and spirits, that make their rings in the green-sward at dusk, and lead poor travellers astray, 'laughing at their harms.'

Passing the base of the Raven Rock, you still follow the windings of the Walkham till you arrive at the foot of a second acclivity, composed of rocks in forms the most picturesque and fantastic that can be imagined. These have of late been rendered peculiarly interesting in consequence of having become the favourite haunt of a flock of goats. They make the scene alive; and to view them standing sometimes on the edges of the crags, where you would fancy the creatures could scarcely find footing, to see them gambol or climb from one mass to another, affords a most lively picture of animal enjoyment. The junction of the streams, which is not far off, forming a thousand rushes of water foaming over a broken bed, the cliffs around, the trees, which in some places overhang the banks, and the opening of the magnificent vista of rock, height, river, and wood that constitute the valley where the cave and mine of the Virtuous Lady are situated, present altogether such a scene as the pencil alone could attempt

to pourtray, so as to give any distinct idea of its character.

When our friend Mr. Harding,<sup>1</sup> the landscape artist, was here, Mr. Bray set off to guide him to the Virtuous Lady; but Harding, who, like most men of genius, is a great enthusiast, was so enchanted with the scenery through which he had to pass in his way thither, that he could never get to the place of destination; and he sat down near the Goat Rock, as we call it, took out his pencil, and I saw no more of Mr. Bray and his guest till they were driven home by the approach of evening.



RUSTIC BRIDGE ON THE WALKHAM.

There is a miniature Alpine bridge that crosses the Walkham at its junction with the Tavy, near the spot just named; this consists of a single plank, with a light piece of wood extended as a hand-rail to hold by in passing. In one part the plank is supported by a *clutter* of rocks beneath, as a Devonian

<sup>1</sup> Since deceased.

would say in describing it. To stop on the middle of this plank and look around, will afford the greatest delight to the lover of the picturesque ; but let him beware his head does not turn giddy, for though he would have but a very few feet to fall, such is the tremendous force of the current in this place, that he would be instantly whirled down like a snow-flake, should the waters be at all full, as they always are after recent rains or sudden heavy showers. A poor girl was lost off this bridge in crossing it not long ago, to go to church. A farmer also, who had been carried down the stream, was found drowned ; and many thought he had fallen into the river from this plank ; the railing is only on one side ; it is altogether very dangerous.

The last time we visited this fairy scene was at noonday ; an hour that makes even cowards bold, especially when the sun is shining out cheerfully, and, like an alchemist, very liberally turning every thing into gold. Such at least was the effect I that day witnessed : every object, even the lightest cloud, wore a bright yellow hue. Not afraid of falling, as the plank was quite dry, I stopped halfway in crossing to enjoy the scene around me. Such was the roar of the water, for the stream was very full, that I could not hear a word Mr. Bray said, as he stood calling to me from the bank, only a few paces distant. After looking for two or three minutes on the rocks, the rush, the foam, and the whirl of the river, I felt my head beginning to whirl too, so that I delayed not a moment to get off as fast as I could from so dangerous a footing ; and I could very well understand how it might be that from time to time so many persons lose their self-possession by a similar affection of the head,

and fall into the stream below, whence they are hurried on to meet death in the first deep pool into which they are borne. These bridges are called *clams*, and they are never found anywhere except across our rocky and mountain streams. Whilst touching on the subject of drowning in rivers, I cannot forbear mentioning the superstitious legend respecting the Tamar, which is by many believed to be as true as the gospel. It is averred, then, that the river Tamar demands, and will have, the sacrifice of a human life once every year; and that if one year passes without a person being drowned in its waters, the next the river is sure to take two lives in order to make up the number.

Walreddon House, before named, a very ancient dwelling, stands not far distant from the Tavy, in the direction of the Virtuous Lady valley and mine. This house was built in the time of Edward VI., but parts of it are of a much earlier date. The present possessor, Mr. Courtenay, is a friend of ours, and one we highly esteem. That gentleman tells me there was formerly a chapel at Walreddon, and other interesting remains of antiquity, not the smallest vestige of which now exists. A portion of the old hall, now converted into a dining parlour, still retains the arms of Edward VI. as its most predominant ornament. There are, too, many windows, arch-headed doors, turnings, windings, and passages, that are truly of ancient date. The latter are somewhat puzzling; and when I was once visiting at the house, I used continually to make mistakes in finding my way to my own chamber. Though I have no absolute authority for saying so, yet I doubt not, whilst Walreddon was in the possession of Sir Richard



Grenville, after his marriage with Lady Howard, it underwent a siege. There was a fine old entrance gate, near the house, which some time since fell down, and I suspect its ruinous condition was not alone the effects of time, more likely of civil contest. The spot in which this aged mansion stands is well sheltered from the winds; but it does not command much view; comfort, more than the picturesque, having been consulted by our forefathers in the erection of their dwellings. The scenery, however, belonging to the domain of Walreddon is of exceeding beauty; the woods, covering the whole of a steep range of hills down to the very edge of the river, being broken and interspersed with cliffs and rocks that are as delightful in their kind as anything to be found in the West. A ride through Walreddon Woods is worth coming miles to enjoy: and Mr. Courtenay tells me he has lately cut a new path, which he thinks exceeds the old one in the variety and beauty of the scenes it unfolds. The house is seen to most advantage from the elevated road, cut on the side of a steep range of hills, leading towards Beer. That road is celebrated throughout the country for its scenery; nothing can be more wild and picturesque than it is in parts. Opposite Walreddon, on the other side of the Tavy, it is characterized by features so replete with grandeur, that they may truly be called majestic. I attempted to describe the scenery of this road in *Fitzford*, in making young John Fitz pass it, after his escape from the cave of the Virtuous Lady. Here, therefore, I say no more about it; for a tale twice told, and a view twice described, would be tedious.

Mount Tavy is a very pretty place in itself; but

not equal to Walreddon or Grenofen as a domain. It is the property of John Carpenter, Esq., and is situated about a mile from Tavistock. Rowdon Wood, now a portion of the estate, is delightful; it lies on the side of the hill, on whose summit the house was built some years ago. The wood overhangs in many places the river Tavy, and forms a beautiful feature in the landscape, backed by the heights of Dartmoor, as the traveller passes on towards Hertford Bridge, or Blackdown. On the other side of the river, opposite to Rowdon, is Park Wood, the residence of Mr. Evans. When the plantations that gentleman has so carefully reared shall have attained their full growth, it will be a very sweet spot; it is now in the most promising state of improvement.

Near Park Wood, indeed separated from it only by a few fields, is the Walla Brook, celebrated by Browne. The stream comes playing gently down the side of a hill, and passing under a bridge, over which runs the public road, it unites itself with the Tavy, opposite the Mount so named. Rowdon Wood many years ago was visited by so remarkable a storm, that it must not here be left unnoticed. The following account of it I extract from Mr. Polwhele's *History of Devon*. "The most extraordinary marks of elemental violence in this neighbourhood are noticed by Mr. Gullett. On the 22nd August, 1768, about nine in the morning, the wind fresh at west-south-west, a very strange phenomenon happened at a place called Rowdon Wood, about a mile distant from the town of Tavistock. A passage, near forty yards wide, was made through this and an adjoining wood, according to the common opinion, by light-

ning. Whatever it was, it tore up vast oaks and flourishing ashes by the roots, lopped the largest limbs of some, twisted and shivered the bodies of others, carried their tops to a considerable distance, and in short made such a devastation as a battery of cannon could scarcely have effected. Vivid flashes of lightning had been seen at Tavistock through the whole morning, and the thunder was loud and violent. Yet I have reason to think that this wreck of the woods was effected by a whirlwind. This whirlwind, whose direction was from about west-south-west to east-north-east, discovered itself in the parish of Beerferris, which borders on the Tamar, about six miles south-west of Tavistock. Here it destroyed an orchard by laying the apple trees level with the ground, and proceeded east-north-east without marking its way by any visible traces till it arrived just opposite the town of Tavistock, where it shivered a few large trees upon a hill, and damaged a farm-house. Rowdon Wood was the next object of its vengeance, when it rolled up the vale of the Tavy into the Forest of Dartmoor, where it had full scope for exhausting itself. A person standing on an eminence in the town of Tavistock saw it, he says, moving over fields and hedges, about the size of a church, till, being intercepted by some houses and woods, he lost sight of it. After its devastation in Rowdon and the contiguous wood, it was seen by a farmer in its passage up the vale of the Tavy towards Dartmoor. 'This man,' says Mr. Gullett, 'whom I met upon the spot in Rowdon Wood, a few hours after the hurricane, informed me that he lived about two miles farther up the vale, in a house situated on the side of a hill. That there was no public road or travelling of any

kind near his house ; but that between nine and ten o'clock he and his family had been alarmed by the noise, as if it were of half-a-dozen coaches rolling over the pavement ; that they ran out, and saw a large cloud, like a woolpack, come tumbling up the vale, with a most frightful noise, and shaking all the hedges and trees over which it passed, as if it would have shivered them to atoms. The remote cause of this I conceive to have been lightning, by a very strong explosion of which the air in that spot was so considerably rarefied that the surrounding air rushed in like a torrent to fill up the vacuum, forming a body wonderfully condensed, and powerful by its violent agitation, and thus destroyed the equilibrium of the atmosphere. The equilibrium being destroyed, the whirlwind gained strength in proportion to its velocity, rushing on in the manner I have described. In order to ascertain the point whether the lightning had any immediate influence in this singular wreck, I then narrowly inspected the shivered trees, not one of which was in the least discoloured ; nor could I perceive the smell of sulphur, or any other smell, indeed, than that of green wood. Some of the young saplings escaped uninjured amidst this ruinous scene ; owing, as I imagine, to their pliability. But what more especially convinces me that this phenomenon was the effect of a whirlwind is, that trees at the distance of forty or fifty feet from each other were torn up by the roots, and thrown in quite opposite directions ; so that their tops met and were entangled, which can only be accounted for from the whirling of the wind.'"

There are two or three rides, in particular, in our neighbourhood, that I would advise all persons who

visit Tavistock for the purpose of viewing the scenery on no account to neglect. One of them is to Ward Bridge: in order to reach it the traveller must cross Whitchurch Down, pass by Sampford Spiney church, and continue along the road which leads to a house and grounds called Woodtown, the country residence of Mr. Cornish, a gentleman of this place; and a residence it is that might be termed dwelling in Paradise, so beautiful, so truly delightful, is the scenery around it. Woodtown is very near Ward Bridge, and after winding down a road which resembles in steepness the slanting roof of a house, the stranger in search of the picturesque finds himself at the foot of the bridge. If he is as fond of wild and fairyland scenery as I am, he will do as I did; which was to trespass on Mr. Cornish's grounds, by getting over a sort of rough wall of stones and briars. This will at once bring him into a wood which sweeps down the hillside to the margin of the rocky stream: in this wood grow oaks that have seen centuries pass over their heads; and if the traveller who admires this spot should also happen to be acquainted with the poetry of Spenser, the scene before his eyes will forcibly remind him of many so exquisitely depicted in the *Faerie Queene*. But I must not trust myself to talk about Spenser, or I shall never get out of the wood; Spenser, the first poet, excepting Shakspeare, that in my youthful days inspired me with a love of the beautiful and the wild, and made me live in a fairy world of fancy. The changes of time, the trials of calamity, and the many melancholy recollections which more or less await all in the maturity of life, cannot efface those momentary gleams of delight that break forth as we retrace in memory the strong

impressions of our early days ; and if these are connected with poetry and Nature they awaken in the heart feelings which preserve in their character the freshness and vivacity of youth, though we should linger near the very portals of the tomb.

There is, too, at Ward Bridge, close to the river, a combination of rocks, moss-grown and overhung with aged oaks that must have seen the days of the Tudors ; they form, in parts, many a sylvan cell, and these afford just such a recess as I can believe Una would have chosen for the place of her repose ; near one of the old oaks there grew, when I first saw the spot, a bramble that was 'not very young, but exceedingly flourishing ; and I stood and fancied there was before my eyes the very oak and bramble celebrated in the *Shepherd's Calendar*.

“ There grewe an aged tree on the greene,  
A goodly oake sometime it had bene,  
With armes full strong and largely displayed,  
But of their leaves they were disarayde :  
The bodie bigge, and mightily pight,  
Thoroughly rooted, and of wonderous hight ;  
Whilome had bene the king of the felde,  
And mochell mast to the husbande did yelde,  
And with his nuts larded many swine ;  
But now the grey mosse marred his rine ;  
His bared boughes were beaten with stormes,  
His toppe was bald, and wasted with wormes,  
His honour decayed, his branches sere.  
Hard by his side grewe a bragging brere,  
Which prowdly thrust into th' element,  
And seemed to threat the firmament :  
It was embellisht with blossoms fayre,  
And there to aye wanted to repayre  
The shepheard's daughters to gather flowers,  
To painte their girlonds with his colowres ;

And in his small bushes used to shrowde  
The sweet nightingale singing so lowde ;  
Which made this foolish brere wexe so bold,  
That on a time hee caste him to scold  
And snebbe the goode oake, for hee was old."

And now having visited Ward Bridge,<sup>2</sup> and trespassed on Mr. Cornish's grounds—a thing by no means to be omitted by any one who has a feeling for the beautiful—the picturesque traveller must mount again, and follow up the rough, steep, and formidable road that lies before him; it will lead him on to Dartmoor, if he likes to go so far. Let him now give his pony his head, and he will pick his own way, in such a path, much better than the rider could do it for him with the bridle. My little shaggy Dobb carries me up this hill as quietly as a lamb; I let the rein hang loose on my arm, and, whilst he paces gently on, amuse myself sometimes in picking the sweet wild strawberry that grows in the hedges by the side of the narrow way. Dobb knows my taste; for when we come to a certain gate, situated half-way up the hill, with a *posty* on either side of it, as the good people call a post in Devonshire, he stops; because he remembers that I always get off at that same gate in order to walk into the field, and enjoy one of the most striking scenes in all the county: yet, such is the peculiarity of this, that I allow no one, who is pleased to take me for a guide, to open

<sup>2</sup> My brother thus speaks of Ward Bridge, in his *Notices of Tavistock and its Abbey*, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*:—"To obtain an idea of a Devonshire stream in all its beauty, the traveller should visit the Walkham at Ward Bridge, about four miles from Tavistock. At this spot the stream makes its way between thickly-clustering fragments of dark moss-grown rocks, and on the banks contiguous is an enchanting little wood, where the oaks are seen flourishing amidst huge masses of granite, covered with moss and lichens."

that gate or visit that spot except at *sunset*. Seen in the broad glare of day, no one would believe it was the same magical view which, when contemplated at sunset, might almost be fancied into a scene raised by some wizard, with a wave of his wand, for our delight.

You stand near the gate in the field that runs along the side of a hill; this hill sweeps down to the river; and you see the stream winding in the most undulating manner, for a considerable distance, through a valley clothed with wood. Hills rise beyond hills; their forms are peculiarly striking: they are bold and acute, not too much rounded, so as to become *lumpy* (a term of censure which has very falsely been applied to our Devonshire heights by one who knew little of them). Beyond these hills, which stand like the side slips of a scene in a theatre, opens a second, or back scene, and that crowns the whole. Part is distinct, part so aerial, so radiant in the glitter of sunshine, so blended with the ultramarine tints of evening, that you see it at one moment as if it were coming into regular forms and distinctness; and at another it seems to die away and lose itself in air. Fronting this extreme distance, however, arises what you would immediately conceive to be a magnificent feudal castle; towers, and turrets, and flanking walls stand in awful array before you; and you think of knights, and ladies, and sentinels on the watch post: and wonder who, in these days, can be the lord of such a stronghold as would have suited the rebel barons in the time of King Stephen, or of King John, when they made him consent to sign *Magna Charta*. But the castle before you, on which the setting sun pours a flood of light, is much older than King John's



days, older even than those of the Saxons ; the last of the princes of Dunheved may have held his court there, or, in the worship of his false gods, have there poured forth the cruel libations of human blood, and have acted worse deeds than did the most ferocious of the old Saxons when they took possession, and made offerings to Frea or Odin in the very heart of the Moor. It is Vixen Tor that rises with such majesty of aspect, and assumes, when seen from this particular spot, a form so completely castellated, that it would deceive the eye of any stranger who for the first time looks upon it at the hour of sunset ; for if he goes there at noonday he will spoil all, and spoil my description, the truth of which I would call on Dobb himself to witness, if he had but a tongue for the service of his mistress ; for well does he know the scene.

As we advance, we find the wild and romantic scenery which surrounds us on every side is scarcely English in its character, and far more like that described by Sir Walter Scott as peculiar to the Highlands.

I am very sorry that I have no adventures to record in our navigation among the rocks to enliven this letter as we journey on towards the Moor ; but, excepting a country lad, we really met nobody but a couple of old women ; one of them, dressed in a red cloak, and carrying a bundle of sticks on her shoulder, reminded me of Otway's Hag, with 'age grown double : ' so fierce and ill-humoured an expression I never beheld in any one of the peasantry in Devonshire, old or young : had she lived in the days of witch-hunting, her face might have endangered her life ; Lavater would have read a lecture on

such a physiognomy. Presently we met a man driving that truly moorland burthen, a horse laden with a *crook* piled with peat. A *brood* of pigs (as our John, in the truly Devonian phrase, called them) we set flying, as they were grunting and enjoying themselves in a puddle in the middle of the road ; and lastly, John killed a very large adder, as he was sunning himself in one of the narrow lanes, which by certain marks (red rings, I think) about the head he pronounced to be the most venomous of its kind. .

At length we came to what Mr. Bray, who is very fond of naming every striking place in our excursions, has been pleased to call the *Pass*, at the entrance of the Moor from this road. Certainly giving names is a part of his vocation, and some hundred years hence, I expect, many a rock designated by him, and possibly this of the *Pass*, may find its way into the maps ; for names, like everything else, must have a beginning. And, as I have some ambition to be immortalized myself, especially in this country, on which, I may say, I have bestowed some pains, I do hope that a certain Druidical basin at Over Tor (or Overturned Tor) on the Moor, in which I once washed my hands, may, out of respect to my memory, bear for ever and a day the very elegant name Mr. Bray bestowed upon it, that of 'Mrs. Bray's washhand basin.' I had also the honour of discovering it, being the only Druidical vestige, save one, I ever found out on the Moor to add to the number of its antiquities. The *Pass*, towards which we are proceeding, is nothing more than what a pass ought to be ; there is space enough for the traveller to go through between two enormous and fantastic-looking rocks, that stand on either side the way, and were once, no doubt, joined together as

closely as the Siamese twins, till the powers below gave the old earth a good shaking, and sent them asunder. Dobb clears the Pass, and finding no temptation to loiter on the road, which he sometimes does, if a little inviting grass catches his eye, we soon enter on the Moor; and the road we are now upon leads us to what the Devonians call the *Back-see-fore-see*<sup>3</sup> side of Vixen Tor, where the group of rocks, for this tor consists of three contiguous masses, rise one hundred and ten feet above the surface with an air of isolated grandeur, in the midst of an elevated space of ground; where all beyond its immediate vicinity is tors, or hills, or broken fragments of granite, but there is no object to interpose and lessen, by a too close opposition in magnitude, the imposing aspect of this Sphinx of the Moor. But I have so often talked of Vixen Tor, that I will here say no more about it, and one of these days I hope you may see it yourself.

You may now, if you please, ride thence to the grand cursus—grand in length, but diminutive in height—and turning into the road near Merrivale Bridge, all that remains may be left to the ponies; for no sooner do they once find that they are on the road home, than they prick up their ears, and set off, each emulous to be the foremost.

Another of our beautiful rides is from this town to the Tamar, near New Bridge; and there, before you come to the bridge, turn off on the left hand and pass through a gate. This will lead you down towards a road which runs along, and partly through, the most delightful woods, close to the banks of the Tamar. The rocks of Morwell, still on the left,

<sup>3</sup> On inquiring of a Devonian, born and bred, what this term could possibly mean, he told me it meant "*the back part of the other front.*"

tower above your head, and after passing under them and through a succession of scenery, of which I give no minute description (because it would fill pages to do it anything like justice), you wind up a steep ascent near the Weir Head, and pass under the shadow of some of the loftiest trees I ever saw, and meet on your way a beautiful silver stream that comes tumbling down and continues its course till it falls into the Tamar below ; and you hear, also,



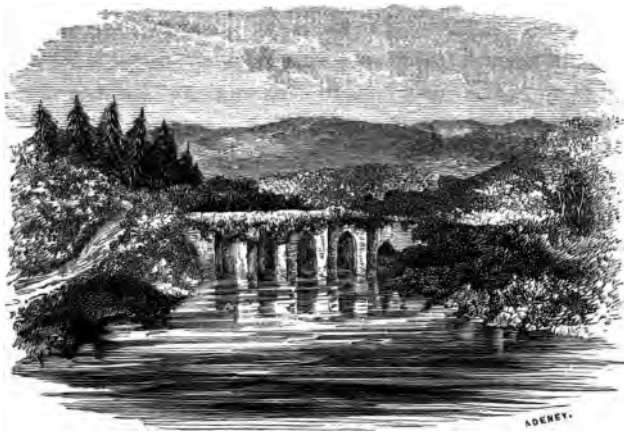
MORWELL ROCKS.

the rush of unseen waters—a circumstance that always produces so much effect on the mind in the midst of a wood. On you go, through scenes that are really enchanting, till you turn into the *new road*. This was, but a very few years since, cut under the immediate direction of the Duke of Bedford ; and this act of munificence has afforded to the public at large so much delight, and thrown open to them such a glorious ride through scenes of almost match-

less grandeur and beauty in their kind, that it deserves the most honourable mention. The Duke's Road leads you over the summits of all the fearful rocks and precipices of Morwell; but they are only fearful in appearance, for the road itself is perfectly safe, and none but nervous or timid people think of getting off their horses as they pass it. After riding on for some distance, you come to a small wood of dwarf oaks; you enter it; pass along the little path on foot, and finally step out on what you have come all this way principally to see—Morwell Rock. This is all I shall say of it, having already described it at large; I have only one observation to make here respecting it, that Morwell Rock, though truly it is a magnificent object, has no right alone to engross the name, since all the rocks around it are likewise those of Morwell, and several are quite as beautiful as this; but its having been considered the greatest lion of its neighbourhood for so many years, the good folks who are accustomed to go thither in the summer months to boil their tea-kettles will not be prevailed with to think it can have a rival, far less an equal. The whole scene, from that rock to the end of the Duke's Road, affords a succession of the noblest objects that can be witnessed in this, or perhaps in any other county in England; always excepting the Lakes, which I have not seen, but which, from drawings and engravings, I know are on a more lofty scale of magnificence.

The Duke of Bedford has an elegant house, called a cottage, at Endsleigh. The ride thither, through Blanchdown Wood, though that is a far-about track, is indeed so delightful, that all persons who would wish to approach the cottage with most advantage, to enjoy the scenery, ought to go that way. I do not

attempt any minute description of Endsleigh ; many of its most beautiful views have been more than once drawn and engraved ; and strangers from all parts of the country come to see it. There is a dell, called the Dairy Dell, watered by a running stream, that is of a most pleasing character ; the Swiss Cottage is very pretty, so is the view from the terrace, which at sunset appears to the greatest perfection ; and the house exhibits much of comfort, combined with good taste, in its decorations. I once heard the Duke of Bedford say, that he had cut rides to the extent of forty miles in his domain of Endsleigh. Those I have seen, especially through Blanchdown, merit the attention of the traveller, and will well repay him for the



NEW BRIDGE.

trouble of finding them out. I remember one spot in particular, not far from New Bridge, that might truly be called Switzerland on a miniature scale. You ride through a wood, where the birds are so little molested that I saw pheasants, woodpeckers,

and birds of every description, amusing themselves by flying from bough to bough, in a manner that showed them to be very tame, or fearless of the approach of a human being. Their haunts seem, indeed, to be undisturbed. Below, the Tamar ran with great rapidity, foaming over the blackest rocks;—on the opposite side of the river, a steep hill was seen covered with crags of granite of a greyish hue, and starting from between them a vast number of young firs, lately planted : altogether the river, the heights, the granite, and the firs, formed a scene of a character so peculiar, that I never recollect having seen one of a similar nature in England. Mr. Bray agreed with me that it might truly be called Swiss : but when the young firs shall have attained their full growth, the rocks will be hidden, and the peculiarity of the scene, alas, destroyed !

Denham Bridge is also one of our delightful rides, but the finest parts of its vicinity are difficult of access. My nephew went thither on a fishing excursion, up the river or down it, I do not know which : sometimes he waded ankle-deep in the water ; but he thought little of such difficulties in his progress, as he declared on his return that he had never witnessed any scenery that excelled what he had that day passed through in his excursion.

The village of Peter Tavy is another point of attraction in this neighbourhood. Close to it is a narrow glen or valley, called the Coombe, but which I have ventured to name the *Valley of Waterfalls*, on account of the vast number of small but exquisitely beautiful falls there seen. All the artists who have hitherto visited Peter Tavy, and we have guided many thither, declare it to be a village unrivalled in

the variety of beauties it affords as studies for the painter. A mill there, the property of Mr. Bray, has been drawn and painted over and over again, has been seen at the Royal Academy, and the Water-Colour Exhibition, and was never yet returned unsold on the hands of an artist.<sup>4</sup> The subject it affords is strikingly characteristic. A rush of water turns the wheel, and forms a cascade that falls into a rapid mountain stream (which rises near, and comes down the coombe) as clear as the brightest crystal; the thatched gable of the mill is covered with ivy; a little bridge crosses the stream opposite the cottage door, and as you stand on this you see the crystal waters come pouring down a shelving and rocky channel in a manner that the pencil alone could pourtray. Above your head wave the branches of some aged and picturesque firs; and if you turn towards the village, the cottages are seen in pretty clusters amidst the trees, and the beautiful tower, with its Gothic pinnacles, finishes a scene that is of such peculiar interest, the eye is never weary in looking on it though seen a thousand times before. Near the mill cottage the children assemble in groups: and ponies, donkeys, pigs, and cocks and hens, are all found there, forming the most animated accompaniments that a Morland or a Wilkie would have desired to complete the picture of rustic life.

Mr. Harding made an oil painting of some cottages just above the entrance to the coombe; he

<sup>4</sup> The mill has been drawn by Mr. Lewis and his son more than once, by Mr. Harding, Miss Kempe, Mr. Hitchins, Mr. Kempe, Mr. Bray, and lastly by Miss Taylor (now Mrs. Worsley), a lady whose talents are of so high an order, that she justly deserves to be ranked with the best water-colour artists of this age.



was rather unfortunate in his visit to the latter spot; for chancing to come hither during the long drought of 1826, there was so little water in the rivers and streams, that he lost the sight of them in all their beauty. Miss Taylor was more fortunate; we carried her to the coombe when it was exactly in the state to please an artist; she was indeed delighted with it, and thought it richly merited the name I had given to it—the Valley of Waterfalls. It is not only the wild and striking manner in which the stream rushes down over the thousand masses of rock, that forms the interest of this spot—the surrounding heights are rocky and broken, and afford an endless diversity of views, with Brent Tor rising from the midst of an elevated plain, as the finishing and prominent object in the distance. Had Claude composed the landscape (as he often did in his pictures, by putting together select portions sketched from nature) he would have put Brent Tor just where it stands and nowhere else.

Peter Tavy is amusing on account of the living groups with which it teems. Such a place it is for children, that it would alarm the admirers of Mr. Malthus's system, could they but see the infantine race who grow up in health, cheerfulness, and poverty, in absolute contradiction to the wisdom of that 'eminent philosopher,' and render Peter Tavy one of the most joyous villages under the sun. You may see the little things of a summer afternoon, not overburthened with clothes, sometimes ragged, and with neither bonnet nor cap to confine a profusion of flaxen hair; as fat and as rosy as young cupids, dabbling in the water like ducks; or tumbling over the rocks, and no harm done, and floating their tiny

boats down the current of the stream, as careless and as happy as if a political economist had never issued an edict against their existence. Here you may find a child of seven or eight years old nursing a baby almost as big as herself, and deriving consequence from the occupation, playing the woman over the other children, or calling out to some one of them by the name of *little girl*, as one child is very fond of calling another, desiring her to keep out of the water, and not to dirt her pinafore in making mud pies. The elder boys are engaged with their kites, or their more active games, whilst a group of little fellows amuse themselves with piling up loose stones, and making baby walls in imitation of those of granite, called *hedges*, on the borders of Dartmoor. In Peter Tavy, too, may be seen 'the spinners and the knitters in the sun;' and the very old and the very young are often seen together side by side; and girls with their pitchers filling them with water from the little channels and rivulets that abound throughout the village. These present pictures that are of endless variety and interest to all who delight in the scenes of rural life.

The school-house displays, too, a large assembly of the rising generation; it stands near the church: the tower and pinnacles of the latter form a beautiful point in the surrounding landscape, from whatever direction it may be viewed. The churchyard is on all sides surrounded by a number of large old lime trees, that cast a sombre shadow around, quite in harmony with the spot consecrated to the repose of the dead. Near Peter Tavy is Cudlipp Town, of which Mr. Bray is lord of the manor. It is of a character similar to the scenery about Peter Tavy, and has

plenty of water and rocks. Cudlipp Town is the place about which there were so many debates in Parliament in the session of 1832, when it was thought proper to cut out that extensive manor from the parish of Tavistock, so that the new franchise, under the Reform Bill then about to pass, should not be extended to the tenants there residing. This exclusion, though the debates it occasioned were known to all the kingdom, Mr. Bray, from circumstances not worth detailing, did not know till it was too late to petition to obtain for his Cudlipp Town tenantry the same privileges as the rest of the parishioners were about to receive.

The last time we visited Peter Tavy in company with some friends, we followed a lane that runs from the church towards Mary Tavy ; and whilst going along, we remarked that these villages were so called from the virgin and saint to whom the churches were dedicated. Mr. Bray told us a story about a judge, who, on a trial being held concerning some land in these parishes, confounded the names of the villages with those of the witnesses ; and gave an order for Peter and Mary Tavy to be summoned into court. After following this long, narrow, and muddy lane, we at length came to a gate, which we opened, and stood on the brow of a hill. A beautiful sight here burst upon us. Below rolled the Tavy, under cliffs and crags, not of a very lofty but of a most pleasing character ; and in the midst of the green-sward, on this side the river from its banks, arose an isolated and enormous mass, called Mary Tavy Rock, covered with ivy, lichens, and every sort of rock plant that can, I believe, be found in Devon. Passing this mass, which, Mr. Harding said, would in itself

furnish many subjects for a painter, we followed the river to one of those light wooden bridges, called clams. This, near Mary Tavy, is a great height above the stream, which, as usual, tumbles over vast portions of broken rock, and nowhere in greater beauty than near this clam. We continued our walk, still on the banks of the Tavy, but meeting it as it comes rapid and foaming from the Moor. Sometimes the path, which was rough, led us close to the water ; at others it carried us up the banks, and along rocks, till at length we had to scale one which intercepted our progress like a wall, and then we had to climb up a steep hill, very near the river, that was beautifully diversified with forest trees. We next perceived on the opposite side a line of cliffs which rose to a considerable height, partially grown with wood, where there was any soil on their surface, and the whole backed by elevated lands, and the never-failing crest of all the views in this quarter, Brent Tor, with its little church perched high in the air.

From this spot, as far as to Tavy Cleave and Rattle brook, the views are as varied as they are wild and beautiful ; and I would recommend every traveller who comes hither to see our scenery, to find his road out to Peter Tavy, crossing Hertford Bridge in his way, which is in itself worth seeing, thence to continue on as far as Mr. Bray's mill in Peter Tavy, to ramble to the coombe, return back through the *Shellands*—a parcel of land near the mill whose name reminds one of the Scotch word *sheeling*—and then if he can get any little boy to become his guide (and sixpence, I dare say, will procure him that advantage), he may go on to Mary Tavy Rock, the clam, &c.; and if he be a good walker, and has another

sixpence to spare his guide, he may proceed to Cudlipp Town and Hill Bridge; and so he will have seen all the sights in that quarter in one round. And when he gets to Cudlipp Town, and asks where the *town* may be, let him understand that a Devonshire one is not made up of number, as it sometimes consists of a single house, or two or three cottages, for here we never rate quantity in such matters.

I have already noticed some of our boldest rock scenery, but there is still one point which I cannot omit. It is the Dewerstone, a noble pile of rocks



THE DEWERSTONE.

in the valley of the Plym, at the head of Bickleigh vale, a short distance from Shaugh Bridge. The river is something like the Walkham at Ward Bridge, with its trees and moss-grown boulders; and the Dewerstone is a huge ivy-grown granite crag, towering above. Not only is the Dewerstone itself of

great interest ; but the view around is most commanding and delightful. It well deserves a visit from the tourist.

Our friend Mr. Evans, of Park Wood, told me the particulars of a story about a ruffian who, some fifty years ago, concealed himself in a wood on the banks of the Tamar. His name was Nicholas Mason. What might have been his motive, as he was the son of respectable parents, to adopt the trade of a bandit I do not know. But he succeeded in terrifying and laying such heavy contributions on the neighbourhood by his nightly depredations, that the farmers and gentlemen at length combined to rout him out. This freebooter was as light of foot as he was of hand ; and one of his practices was to get into farm-houses by descending with the utmost care the chimneys during the time the families were at rest. His spoils he placed in a bag, and managed to make his retreat in the same dark and strange manner. For some time his mode of action was not suspected, as in the morning all the doors were found locked, just as they were on the previous night, and no signs of violence appeared. The good people, thus robbed, were puzzled what to think, and as a bad character is a very bad thing, the devil, being the father of thieving as well as of lying, obtained the credit of achieving in his own person what were in fact but the acts of one of his sons. However as the robber, grown bold by success, at length ventured on hen-roosts and the firstlings of the flock, human agency was suspected to have some concern in the matter.

The robber was finally discovered to have secreted himself in a cave, situated in a thick wood near the Tamar. The discovery was made by a hound

quarrelling with a brother hound for some bones that were scattered near the entrance of Mason's den. The squire and huntsmen were led to suspect, from this circumstance, that they had found out the hiding-place of the thief; and having dexterously concerted their measures, so as not to give him any previous alarm, they called in the assistance of some sturdy ploughmen who were working not very far from the spot. The attack commenced, and the robber, like a hare, got the start of his pursuers; for huntsmen, hounds, and peasants were all after him. Suddenly he was espied in a thicket of heath and furze, under the brow of a precipice, as he was seeking concealment among the adjacent rocks. From this stronghold he was speedily hurled by a bold peasant armed with a pitchfork, who managed to crawl up the cliff after him, though not without danger, as Mason snapped a pistol at him, which missed fire. He was at length taken, yet not till the huntsmen and dogs that had unkennelled him, were again obliged to follow in chase, so fleet was he of foot, so quick in doubling, and so intimately acquainted with the place in all its nooks, windings, and ways of retreat. On being taken he displayed a temper of the most ferocious daring, told the two gentlemen who had been the principal hunters that he regretted they had escaped him, and assured them they owed their safety to their not having caught his eye in time to put his fire-arms in proper order to shoot them.

The party next examined the cave; the ruffian had there collected every sort of necessary for his own accommodation: there was a pan of milk (for he used to milk the farmers' cows long before daylight) scalding over the embers of a wood fire; a fat sheep

that he had stolen, and was skinning at the moment of the discovery, hung on the side of the cave, and all sorts of stolen goods were there amassed in regular order. These were removed, as the whole party, with shouts of triumph, bore along their captive to undergo the examination of the magistrates in full assembly. His father and mother, poor but honest people, to whom he had always been a torment from his earliest days, showed the utmost sorrow for his miserable condition, and felt that shame for him which he did not feel for himself. Such was the terror this man had inspired, that though he was in custody, and about to stand his trial, many of the poor country people feared to swear to their own property found in the cave ; one woman, however, deposed to a shirt as belonging to her husband ; she swore to the work being her own, and said she could not be mistaken, for she was left-handed. Other witnesses at length came forward, and Mason was convicted and hanged. The wood in which he had secreted himself is situated near Carthamartha Rocks ; it is called Dunterwood.

In the road from Tavistock to Plymouth the traveller passes over a high tract of land, commanding some most delightful views, called Roborough Down, where is situated a remarkable isolated rock of superstitious import. I quote the following from Mr. Bray's Journals.

"I may here also notice Tiddebrook, situated about a mile and a half from our town, on the old Plymouth road. It is a curious ancient building, having its porch carried up in the form of a tower, embattled at the top. The rest of the structure has the appearance of little better than a farm house. It probably



belonged to the Abbey ; but I have not been able to collect any information respecting it.

“About a mile farther is the village of Horrabridge, which receives its name from a bridge of three pointed arches of irregular size ; it is picturesque when viewed from the road, where some fine old trees throw their feathery branches across the stream.

“The scenery at Huckworthy also well repays the trouble, not to say danger, of the descent that leads to it. A bridge of two arches crosses a rapid stream ; but I was vexed to find that a great deal of the ivy that used to hang in festoons from the top of these arches had been stripped off. Above the bridge is a mill, the water from which, white with foam, falls into a pool, from its depth of the blackest colour. Below it is the machinery of a mine, which crosses the river ; and the wheel, in perpetual motion, is one of large diameter. The hill I had just descended, with some cottages interspersed amid wood, presented a striking object, and the varied outline of the Dartmoor tors formed a pleasing horizon to complete the picture.

“I proceeded to the village of Walkhampton, and finding there nothing worthy attention, determined to pay a visit to the church. This is situated at some distance from the village, on an elevated spot ; and being surrounded with fields inclosed with stone hedges, I had great difficulty to find my way to it. The pinnacles of the tower are remarkably elegant, having a kind of corona or battlement, out of which they spring in a taper form, enriched with well-defined ornaments, and surmounted with a cross of the same material. The view from the churchyard is strikingly grand, commanding a great extent of country, of

which the bold tors of Dartmoor form no inconsiderable part.

“Morwell House, in this neighbourhood, deserves some mention, as it was formerly the hunting-seat of the Abbot of Tavistock: it is a quadrangular building, in the Gothic style; the gateway very similar to those of the Abbey: it has a groined ceiling of freestone, which appears to have been plastered over and washed with yellow.”

Of that most delightful scene, *Hill Bridge*, I find the following notice:—

“Hill Bridge is well worthy attention from its singularity, being composed of four perfectly flat arches, if I may be allowed the expression, formed of long flat stones placed side by side, with their ends resting on the piers. The parapet is but ten or twelve inches high, made merely by similar stones lying along upon the others. It is one of the simplest bridges I almost ever saw, and quite in harmony with the surrounding scene. Below it the water is dammed back by a weir, for the purpose of carrying a leat to Huel Friendship Mine. At some distance higher up the stream, another leat is taken up for another mine adjoining.”

“In one of my former excursions, I crossed Whitchurch Down, leaving Holwell at my left hand, and, passing near a couple of cottages, which I was informed by a friend were called East and West St. Martin’s, and probably belonged to the Abbey, proceeded towards Huckworthy Bridge. My object was now to explore the upper part of the river; and I accordingly, after passing the bridge, turned up the lane leading to the left, towards the Moor. The scenery here is so strikingly wild and picturesque

that I do not recollect having seen any more so in South Wales, which I visited about seven or eight years ago. The view is up a valley of considerable extent, through which the river Walkham flows in a rapid and winding course. The hills on each side are bold and steep, possessing every variety of rock and wood, with here and there tracts of cultivation, the hedges being so irregular as to add a pleasing intricacy to the scene. This is interspersed occasionally with patches of furze in blossom; and enlivened with the ascending smoke of a few scattered cottages in the most romantic situations.

“I had never seen the tors of Dartmoor to such advantage; as I had been mostly accustomed to behold them without any other foreground than the barren Moor itself; where the eye, in going from one tor to another, must pass over the same unvaried blank, unrelieved even by a change of colour. But here, beyond the summit of a hill clothed with the finest wood, peered the still loftier heights of the rocky tors fading into ærial blue. At every step they seemed to lose themselves, or to burst abruptly on the sight where they were least expected. Indeed they appeared occasionally to change their situations, and sometimes to be nearer, at others at a greater distance, as the intervening objects were more or less numerous, or nearer or less diversified.

“There is this advantage, also, that as the valley may be said almost to run up between them, they nearly surround it, and are, therefore, more grouped together, or thrown more into perspective. Vixen Tor, which I had always admired, even in its isolated situation, being a vast mass of rock standing on a narrow base, here shows itself with still more im-

posing grandeur, as it forms the principal object where all around are striking. The flitting lights added considerably to the effect ; a gleam of sunshine sometimes illuminating a rock or a cottage, that otherwise might have escaped attention.

“For about a mile and a half my eye was fixed upon this fascinating scene, though, from the intervening hedge, it seemed as if I was looking through a moving trellis. For a considerable distance the hedge is covered below with hollies, and above with the thick branches of ash and other trees ; so that I am convinced a great deal of the scenery must be lost to the traveller in the summer ; but then in recompense, what he does see must be doubly gratifying, not only from its being clothed in superior beauty, but even from the abruptness with which it must occasionally burst upon him.

“There is one spot, near a deep ravine worn with the floods, which now, however, was perfectly dry, where the valley must always be seen to the greatest perfection, as there is nothing to obstruct the view, and yet enough may be found to form a foreground. Some neighbouring cottages also gave it additional animation. A little cluster of these, which I understood was called Furzetown, were mostly of a singularly grotesque form ; raised amid large rocks, some of which not only served as foundations, but actually jutted out of the walls of which they formed a part. I was surprised to find so much wood immediately in the neighbourhood of the Moor. One of these cottages had a kind of irregular avenue, near which ran a little rocky stream, overhung with trees of the most fantastic shapes. One which particularly drew my attention had apparently fallen across it, the lateral

branches having formed themselves into young trees."

After gratefully thanking you for the honour you have conferred in allowing me, for so long a period, the pleasure of your correspondence, and of receiving, in the kindest manner, such information as I have been able to convey to you concerning the history, &c., of the vicinities of the Tavy and the Tamar, I was about to close these letters, and for the present take my leave, when a volume I had never before seen was put into my hands. It was the *Historic Collections relating to the Monasteries of Devon*, by the Rev. George Oliver, of Exeter. Mr. Oliver is known as a learned antiquary, and a most worthy man. He is the minister of the Roman Catholic chapel in that city.

I found in his book some most curious matter relating to the Abbey of Tavistock, which he had principally collected from those unquestionable authorities, the *Registers of the Bishops of Exeter*. To omit such notices as this historian's work have placed within my reach would render these letters incomplete; to abridge them would be unjust to Mr. Oliver and to the subject: I venture, therefore, to give entire the following extracts respecting

#### THE ABBOTS OF TAVISTOCK.

"1st. *Almer*, who is described in the Cartulary of the Abbey as a good scholar, and exemplary for his piety to God and charity to man. He was doomed to witness the utter destruction of his monastery by the Danish invaders. How long he survived this catastrophe is uncertain.

"2nd. *Livingus*. He was originally a monk of St. Swithin's Monastery at Winchester. His benefactions and services to Tavistock Abbey entitle him to the name of its second founder.

*‘Per Ordgarum surgendi exordium, per Livingum Episcopum crescendi accepit auspiciū.’*—WILLIAM of Malmesbury. In 1032 he was promoted to the See of *Crediton*. On the death of his uncle Brithwold, the Bishop of *Cornwall*, he succeeded in uniting that diocese in perpetuity to his own see. In 1038 King Harold appointed him to the Bishopric of Worcester, which he continued to hold, with *Crediton*, until his death, on Sunday, 23rd March, 1046. He was buried at Tavistock.

“3rd. *Aldred*, a monk of Winchester, succeeded Livingus, first as Abbot of Tavistock, and secondly as Bishop of Worcester. In 1060, he was translated to York, where he sat until his death, on 11th September, 1069.

“4th. *Sistricus*, who died in the spring of 1082.

“5th. *Gaufred I.*, who died in 1088.

“6th. *Wymond*. He was deposed by St. Anselm for simony, in 1102.—See *Eadmeri History*, folio 67.

“7th. *Osbert* was abbot in 1109.<sup>5</sup>

“8th. *Gaufred II.* was the next abbot.

“9th. *Robert de Plympton*, who is supposed to have died in 1145.

“10th. *Robert Postett*, who was abbot nine years.

“11th. *Walter*, who is said to have died in 1174.

“12th. *Baldwin*.

“13th. *Stephen*.

“14th. *Herbert*. To this abbot Pope Celestine II. addressed a bull of privileges, on 29th May, (*Vide* ‘2 Register Vesey,’ folio 41) 1193.

“15th. *Jordan* was appointed, I believe, in 1204.

“16th. *William de Kernit*, Prior of Otterton, was elected Jordan’s successor in 1220. He held his dignity four years.

“17th. *John*.

“18th. *Alan de Cornwall*, who died in 1248.

“19th. *Robert de Kitevol*.

“20th. *Thomas*, who died in 1257.

“21st. *John de Northampton*, who presided during two years.

“22nd. *Philip Trentheful*, a monk of St. Swithin’s Monastery, at Winchester, was confirmed the next abbot, in October,

<sup>5</sup> We regret the very jejune and imperfect account of the following abbots until the accession of Philip Trentheful in 1259, when we take for our guide the Registers of the Exeter Bishops.

1259. He made his profession to Bishop Bronescombe, in the following words :—*Vide Register, folio 8. 'Ego frater Philippus, electus Abbas Ecclesie de Tavistock, promitto tibi, Pater Dne. Waltere Exon Epe., tuisque successoribus canonice intronizandis et Sancte Exoniensis Ecclesie, fidem et canonicam per omnia subjectionem.'*

"23rd. *Alured*, confirmed abbot on the 29th Sept. 1260.

"N.B. *Fecit professionem quam obtulit super principale Altare.*—Register Bronscombe.

"24th. *John Chubbe* succeeded, but was deposed by Bishop Bronescombe, *in crastino Sancti Edmundi Regis et Martyris*, (21st Nov.) 1269.

"The bishop describes him as '*Monasterii bonorum dilapidator intolerabilis et manifestus*,' reprobates his scandalous neglect of religious discipline, and enumerates instances of his savage violence and even sacrilege.

"25th. *Robert*, who was substituted in the place of *John Chubbe*, on Palm Sunday, 1270.

"26th. *Robert Champeaux, aliter Campbell*, succeeded in 1278.

"This abbot is highly commended for his tender piety and zeal for improvement. During his government several parts of the Abbey were rebuilt, but particularly the conventual church, which is said to have been three hundred and seventy-eight feet long, without including the Lady Chapel. Bishop Stapeldon dedicated this noble church, and two altars in the nave, on the 21st of Aug. 1318. It was finally taken down in 1670.

"On the 21st of May, the same year, the bishop had dedicated St. Eustachius' parish church at Tavistock, which adjoined to the Abbey enclosure.

"This amiable and benevolent abbot, with the consent of his convent, A.D. 1291, appropriated for ever the whole profits arising from an estate called Westlydeton (granted two years before to his Abbey by Sir Odo Le Arcedeckne) to the providing of the poor with clothes and shoes; the annual distribution of which was made in the cloisters on the second of November, the commemoration of all the faithful departed.

"In consequence of this abbot's petition, Bishop Stapledon approved and confirmed a perpetual chantry to be erected in the parish church of Whitchurch, near Tavistock, for four priests, who should be bound to celebrate the daily and nightly

office, together with the service of the dead : to say three, or at least two requiem masses every day, besides one of our Lady. In their suffrages they were to pray for the prosperity of the said abbot and convent ; for King Edward II. and his Queen Isabella ; for the bishop, dean, and chapter of Exeter, and for the founders and benefactors of Tavistock Abbey. The superior of these priests was to be called the arch-priest ; he was to live in common with them, and they were to be called his *socii* or fellows. He was also to be charged with the care of the parishioners. *Vide* Stapledon's Register, folio 165.

"N.B. The famous charter, *De Libertatibus Comitatus Devon*, granted by King John, and its confirmation by his son Henry III., were preserved in Tavistock Abbey. Bishop Stapledon took copies of these originals, and has inserted them in folio 152 of his register.

"22nd. *Robert Bonus*, inducted 13th June, on the recommendation of Pope John XXII. 1328.

N.B. Bishop Grandison deposed this abbot for contumacy and intemperate behaviour, 24th of October, 1333.

"23rd. *John de Courtenay*, substituted for Robert, 24th of April, 1334.

"N.B. This abbot had very little of the spirit of a religious man. He was passionately fond of field sports, was very conceited and foppish in his dress and a most incurable spendthrift. During his government discipline seems to have been banished from the convent. Frequently but two of the community were present at the regular meals in the refectory, whilst the rest were feasting sumptuously in their private chambers. From the neglect of repairs the monastery was falling into a dilapidated state, and, moreover, was overcharged with debts. *Monasterium quod solebat abundare divitiis et honore, erat et est oneribus debitorum usque ad MCCC. libras sterlingorum et aliorum multiplicium onerum sarcinâ prægravatum.* *Vide* '1 Register Grandison,' folio 134.

"29th. *Richard de Esse* succeeded in 1348.

"30th. *Stephen Langdon* succeeded in 1362.

"31st. *Thomas Cullyng*, confirmed as abbot on the 12th of February, 1380-1.

"I believe this abbot finished the campanile of the church, begun by his predecessor. He died June 11th.



"32nd. *John May*, confirmed as his successor, 30th July, 1402. He died 7th February, 1421-2.

"33rd. *Thomas Mede*, elected 26th March, and confirmed by Bishop Lacy, 19th April, 1422.

"This abbot is accused of neglecting regular discipline, of enormous dilapidations, and of simony; but the charge appears to be exaggerated.

"34th. *Thomas Cryspyn*, elected 11th June, 1442. His death happened 5th April, 1447.

"35th. *William Pewe*, elected 2nd May; confirmed abbot 23rd of that month, and died 26th December, 1450.

36th. *John Dynnynton* was elected to succeed William on the 17th of the following January, and was confirmed by Bishop Lacy 20th February.

"N.B. It appears from 2, Rymer's *Fædera*, p. 408, that this abbot obtained a papal grant to use the pontificals, and to give the episcopal benediction at mass and at table.

"37th. *Richard*, whose institution is not recorded in the Register.

"38th. *Richard Yerne*. I can find no date of his confirmation.

"39th. *Richard Banham*: the date of whose election or confirmation I have not succeeded in discovering. King Henry VIII. created him a mitred abbot 22nd January, 1513. It may be observed here that these parliamentary abbots ranked among themselves in the Upper House according to seniority of creation. The contest which this Abbot maintained with Bishop Oldham has been variously related; but the following facts, extracted from that Bishop's Register, may be depended upon:—

"'This Abbot was cited 15th April, 1513, to appear before Dr. Richard Collet, the Bishop's commissioner, to answer to the charge of contempt of episcopal authority. The Abbot, instead of explaining the occasion of his conduct, or offering any apology, produced a written appeal to the Roman Court. The appeal was declared by the commissioner to be frivolous and inadmissible. For his obstinacy the Abbot was suspended that very day; and, on the 22nd of the same month, was excommunicated *propter multiplicem contumaciam*. On the 10th of May he appeared in person before Bishop Oldham at the palace in Exeter, and on his bended knees most humbly and

most earnestly entreated to be absolved from his censures; and offered to submit himself unconditionally to the Bishop's correction. The Bishop then tendered the oath of submission to the see of Exeter, and, after he had taken it, absolved him from his censures, whereupon the Abbot paid him down five pounds of gold.

"The repentance of the Abbot seems to have been insincere; for soon after he appealed to the Primate, William Warham, and to Richard Fitz-James, Bishop of London. The question chiefly turned on the right of episcopal visitation. These prelates decided on the 8th of February following, that the Abbot had not produced any indults, bulls, or vouchers authorizing any exemption from the jurisdiction of the ordinary; they therefore decreed that he and his convent should submit to this regularly constituted authority, as their predecessors had done from time immemorial: they recommended the Abbot to apply to the Bishop for the benefit of absolution; and they directed the Bishop to confer it without hesitation, and to treat the Abbot with mildness and paternal affection.' So far Oldham's Register.

"This Abbot was not discouraged by defeat. From the the primate he appealed to the court of Rome; and at last succeeded in obtaining from Pope Leo X. a bull of such ample and extraordinary privileges as completely to indemnify him for his former expenses and trouble. The bull is dated 14th September, 1517 [it is copied in Mr. Oliver's Appendix]. It expressly exempts the Abbey of Tavistock, with its several dependencies, from all archiepiscopal, and all episcopal jurisdiction, visitation, and superiority, and takes it and them under the sole and immediate protection of the Holy See. It declares that all suspensions, interdicts, and excommunications pronounced against them by any other authority than that of the See Apostolic are absolutely null and void: '*Nulla, irrita et invalida, nulliusque roboris vel momenti.*' As an acknowledgment for such sweeping liberality, the abbot was annually to pay to the Apostolic Chamber, on the feast of SS. Peter and Paul, half an ounce of gold, *i.e.*, twenty shillings of lawful money of Great Britain.

"40th. *John Peryn*, it is said, succeeded in December, 1523; but his confirmation is not recorded in Bishop Veysey's Registers. In virtue of the bull of Pope Leo X., I observe

that this abbot styles himself, in several leases before me, '*Abbas exempti monasterii Beate Marie et Sci Rumonis de Tavystock.*' On the surrender of the monastery he was granted a pension of £100 per annum. Nineteen of his religious obtained salaries at the same time. The grants of these pensions are dated 26th April, 31st Henry VIII.

"The revenues of this Abbey were rated at £902 5s. 7d. per annum. The site of this great Abbey and the principal of its estates were granted by King Henry VIII., on the 4th July, 31st year of his reign, to Lord John Russell.

"The Abbot's residence in Exeter occupied the site of those premises in South Street now in the possession of Mr. Russell. I have met with a lease (dated 7th of November, a few months before the dissolution of the Abbey) by which John, the last abbot, let the said dwelling-house to Edward Brydgeman, and Jane his wife, for a term of sixty years. '*Hospicii nostri vocati Le Inne de Bere cum omnibus suis pertinenciis in vico Australi Civitatis Exon.*' Query, was this the house mentioned in *Doomsday* as being mortgaged to the Abbey by a citizen of Exeter?

"After the suppression of the Abbey, a chapel was erected within its enclosure, and licensed for the celebration of divine worship, at the request of the noble Lady Dorothy Mountjoy, on the 10th March, 1541-2.—*Vide Register Veysey*, folio 109.

"The Registers mention a priory in St. Mary's, the principal of the Scilly Islands, as being dependant on Tavistock Abbey.

"Bishop Brantyngham, 26th September, 1374, granted an indulgence of twenty days to all persons within the diocese of Exeter, *Penitentibus et Confessis*, who should contribute to the support of the Lepers' House, dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene, at Tavistock.

"There was a chapel of St. Margaret near the town of Tavistock.—*Vide* '3 Register Lacy,' folio 53.

"Also, a chapel of St. John the Baptist, '*Juxta aquam de Tavy in Parochiâ de Tavystock.*'—*Ibid.*, folio 128."

“LICENSE FOR THE ABBAT OF TAVISTOCKE TO WEAR  
THE PONTIFICALIA.”<sup>6</sup>

“The King, to all to whom these presents shall come, greeting. Be it known that we, of our especial grace, have granted and given permission for us and our heirs, as much as in us lies, to John Denynton, Abbat of the house and church of the blessed St. Mary and St. Rumon, to solicit and have permission from the sovereign Pontiff, the present Pope, to use the mitre, amice (almucio), sandals, and other pontifical insignia, and of blessing in the solemnity of masses, and pronouncing absolutions with the same authority, and in the same manner, as any Bishop uses.

“And that the said Abbat may likewise prosecute any other provisions concerning the above matter, and enjoy the benefit of them for himself and his successors for ever.

“And further, we, of our greater favour, have granted and given license to the said Abbat, that he may receive Apostolic Letters and Bulls for the aforesaid provisions, and all and singular therein contained, execute, read, and cause to be read, and them and every of them altogether, fully and wholly, quietly, peaceably, and without harm, according to the effect of the said Letters and Bulls, and each of them, may use and enjoy; forbidding that the said Abbat or his proctors, fautors, counsellors, helpers, or adherents, or any other his solicitors, readers, or publishers of the said Letters and Bulls, shall be by us or our heirs impeded, disquieted, disturbed, molested, or oppressed, the statutes for provisors, ordinations, provisions, enacted to the contrary, or other things, causes, matters whatever, which on our or any other part may be said or alleged, notwithstanding.

“In witness whereof we have caused these our Letters to be made patent.

“Witness the King, at Westminster, the third day of February, (36 Henry VI.), A.D. 1457.”

<sup>6</sup> From *Notices of Tavistock Abbey*, by Mr. Kempe.

And now having conveyed to you in these letters, all the information that I deem of interest, or could collect, respecting this most interesting portion of our county, I must conclude with repeating the hope that it will not be very long before you fulfil your promise of allowing us the happiness of seeing you, and guiding you in person to the various scenes I have attempted to describe.

In the interval, allow me to assure you that should these letters appear before the public, whatever may be their fate, my debt of obligation to you can never be forgotten. To you I owe the first suggestion, and I may add the plan, of my most pleasing task, which has afforded me hours of delight in the composition. And to know that I have been so fortunate in any way to afford you entertainment, or meet your approval in the attempt, will be, in the recollection of my labours, their highest and most valued reward.

Adieu, my dear Sir,

And believe me ever gratefully

And respectfully yours,

ANNA ELIZA BRAY.

# INDEX.

- ABBEY**, of Tavistock, the glory of the town, i. 14; evil consequences of the dissolution of abbeys, 429; sites of particular offices in the ruins of abbeys, 440; Tavistock Abbey, history and description, 383-440 (see *Tavistock* for details). Romantic sites of abbeys, ii. 8.  
**Abbot** of Tavistock, by what title called to the House of Lords, i. 233. Succession of the abbots of Tavistock down to the suppression, ii. 416.  
**Aboriginal inhabitants** of the West, vestiges of, i. 15.  
**Absalom's memorial**, ii. 15.  
**Adam**, its signification in Hebrew, i. 262.  
**Adams, Miss Mary**, ii. 145.  
**Adders**, mode of charming, i. 90; abundance of, on Moor, *ibid*; of what the adder a symbol, 91.  
**Adoration**, universality of that of the sun, i. 55.  
**Æschylus**, beautiful allegory of, i. 355.  
**Affliction**, tales of, ii. 298.  
**Age**, a tree's, discovered by its rings, i. 97.  
**Aggeration**, in forming the tors, i. 212.  
**Air Tor**, i. 248.  
**Alfred the Great**, reasons for considering an inscribed stone commemorative of, i. 331; his translation of Boëthius, when printed, 332; wisdom of, in his municipal polity, 358.  
**Alfred**, son of Ethelred, commiseration for, at his death, i. 417.  
**Alfricus**, his charge against Livingus, i. 417; his artful conduct, 418.  
**Algarus**, account of, i. 393-395.  
**Almer**, first abbot of Tavistock, i. 392.  
**Almighty**, under what name worshipped by the ancient Britons, i. 55.  
**Alphabet**, letters of Greek, used by the Druids, i. 48.  
**Alpine bridge**, miniature, described, ii. 385.  
**Amber beads**, wreath of, worn on the brows of Hengist, i. 135.  
**Ambrosius**, Merlin's original name, i. 78.  
**Amesbury**, or Ambresbury, its origin, i. 78.  
**Amulets**, glass, of Scotland, i. 91.  
**Aneurin's** description of the procession sacred to the British Bacchus, i. 134.  
**Angelic hierarchy**, grades of, i. 444.  
**Anglo-Saxon monasteries**, holiness and superstition of, i. 425.  
**Animals** of Dartmoor, i. 292.  
**Antiquities** of Dartmoor, destruction of, i. 51, 52.  
**Apple-tree**, ceremony of saluting, i. 290.  
**Arcedekne, Le, Odo**, a benefactor of Tavistock Abbey, grant of Westlydeton, i. 421.  
**Arch**, ruined, described, i. 386.  
**Arch-Druid**, awe inspired by his presence, i. 211.  
**Arkite mysteries**, traces of, i. 92; mythological ark of Noah, 139.  
**Arras** and hangings discriminated, ii. 252.  
**Arscot, Mr.**, i. 278.  
**Arthur**, mythological, i. 139; his character and mythological renown, 412.  
**Arthur's Stone** on Cevyn Bryn, i. 120; King Arthur's Oven, 254.  
**Ashen twig**, pagan notion of its power, i. 90; origin of, 91, 92.  
**Ashtaroth**, groves dedicated to, i. 95.  
**Athenians**, judicious selection by, of romantic sites for temples, ii. 8.  
**Atkynses**, the, ii. 305.  
**Avenue**, extensive Druidical, i. 153.  
**Augury**, Druidical, i. 58, 59; universality of the superstition of augury in the

- earliest ages, 141; probable origin of the confidence in auguries from the feathered tribes, 142.
- Augustine friars, their distinguishing habit, i. 385; expulsion, 392; the Augustine order a favourite with the family of the Earls of Devon, 395.
- Baal, or Bel, idolatrous worship of, i. 86; horses given to, 87.
- Bacchus of the Druids, i. 53; solemn procession to, 134.
- Back-see-for-see side of Vixen Tor, ii. 398.
- Badger of Devon, notice of, i. 297.
- Bair-down, conjectural meaning of, i. 56; 'the hill of bards,' 68; general description of, 70, *et seq.*; inscriptions on the granite, 69, 342; beautiful ravine, 70; remarks on the etymology of Bair-down, rural inscriptions, &c., 71; British monument on Bair-down, 99, 115; ancient sepulchre, 343; Bair-down Man, 115, 344.
- Baking, ancient British mode of, i. 255.
- Banham, John, the mitred abbot of Tavistock, i. 425.
- Bard, derived from *bar*, a fury, i. 74.
- Bardic alphabet, i. 77.
- Bards, ancient, of Britain, i. 44; testimony of Tacitus to their eminence in eloquence and poetry, 46; last refuge of the British bards, 100; genius and character of the bards, 101; last vestige of their retreat in the wood of Wistman, 102.
- Baretti, characterized, ii. 106; story of the old woman, 107.
- Barrier, stones anciently used for, in the celebration of public games, i. 319.
- Barrows, i. 99, 100, 115, 133, 140, 155, 231, 232, 242, 248; on Stennen Hill, 115; purposes and contents of barrows, 140; near Merrivale Bridge, 154; on Mis Tor, 230; description of large circular, 254.
- Basins, rock, on Dartmoor, i. 53, 200, 202-207, 211, 212, 215, 222, 223, 229, 240, 241, 245, 248; on the summit of Vixen Tor, 61; on Longford Tor, 114; discovery of two on Vixen Tor, 201; account of others, and purposes to which applied by the Druids, 337-341.
- Bat, horned, story of, i. 279.
- Beacon, ancient, i. 234.
- Beauty, female, of the peasantry of Cornwall and Devon, ii. 274.
- Bedford, Duke of, extirpation of red deer by his stag-hounds, i. 294; lands of the Abbey of Tavistock granted to his ancestors at the dissolution, 424; notice of the grant, and of the Bedford family, 433; donation by the Duke of Bedford of a peal of bells and an organ, 451. Patron of the public library, ii. 285; Duke of Bedford's road described, 399.
- Betor, South, i. 241.
- Bel, god of the sun, i. 87; immolation of human victims to, 105; high festival on the first of May, 284.
- Bel Tor, i. 56; description, 241; derivation of name, *ibid.*
- Bell, passing, ancient belief respecting, i. 451.
- Beloe, Mr., his manuscript copy of complimentary poems addressed to William Browne, ii. 195.
- Bears, traditions of, on Dartmoor, i. 34, 71.
- Benedict, account of, i. 400; legendary tales of, 401, 402.
- Benedictines, always clad in black, i. 385; their incredible increase, 394; tribute to their learning, 397; remarks on the order, 400; their attire and benevolence, 425.
- Betsey Grimal's tower, described, i. 436. Its situation, ii. 14; story of Betsey Grimal, 148.
- Beautiful and wild, durability of impressions from the, ii. 392.
- Bible and Key, custom of discovering a suspected thief by, ii. 126.
- Birds of Dartmoor, i. 58, 65; birds still considered as omens of good and evil, 141; various birds of Devon characterized, 274; Mr. Johnes's account of the birds of Dartmoor, 300. Concert of birds poetically described, ii. 202.
- Bishoprics, plurality of, in Livingus, i. 418.
- Bishops of Devonshire, succession of, i. 356.
- Blackbird, Moor, i. 59, 221, 273.
- Blackbirds, anecdotes of, ii. 10.
- Blackbrook, i. 115, 256.
- Blount, Martha, her treatment of Pope, ii. 331.

- Blue robes of the lawyers of the ancient Britons, i. 49.
- Bob, 'black-headed,' notice of, i. 275.
- Boëthius's *De Consolatione Philosophiæ*, the early edition of, i. 457.
- Bogs on Dartmoor, i. 158.
- Bones, gigantic, discovered, i. 438.
- Borlase, his opinion of the probable uses of the rock-basins, i. 202; and of the purposes of the tolmen, 226.
- Botany of Devon, i. 270, 273.
- Bourgeois, Sir Francis, ii. 333.
- Braddock Down, battle of, ii. 217.
- Bray, Mr., unexpected adventure of, i. 8; Bair-down enclosed by, 68.
- Bray, Rev. E. A., projected history of Tavistock, i. 3; collection of inscriptions by, 77-84; sonnet by, 92; poetical description of fairy car by, 170; extracts from his Journals—Wistman's Wood, 96; Crockern Tor, 108, 112; Longford Tor, 113; Dennabridge Pound, 122; Merrivale stone-circles, 149; cursus and cromlech, 154; Vixen Tor, &c., 196; Pew Tor, 209; Sheeps Tor, 216; Elford's Cavern, the 'Pixies' Grotto,' 218; Cox Tor, Roose Tor, and Staple Tor, 219; Mis Tor, 228; Brent Tor, 233; source of the Tavy, 239; letter addressed to Mrs. Bray concerning inscribed stones, 313-337; excursion on Dartmoor to Over Tor, 337; account of the remains of Tavistock Abbey, 434-440. Verandah and garden inscriptions by, ii. 12-14; biography of, 302-373; his family, 304; christening, 306; anecdotes of his childhood, 308; pronounced a poet by a physiognomist, 311; put to school at Moreton Hampstead, 312; his devotion to poetry, 320; his aptitude for learning languages, and pursuits in London, 321; his commission as captain-lieutenant in the Royal Devon Miners, 322; meets the king (then Duke of Clarence) at a party, *ibid*; enters as a student of the Middle Temple, 323; eminent persons with whom he became acquainted, with their characters, and anecdotes, 325-343; his *vers de société*, 344; poems by Mr. Bray, 345-358; goes the Western Circuit—his timidity as a barrister, 359; named the *Castilian*, 360; legal opinion on a will, *ibid*; quits the bar, 362; friendship with Mr. Mathias, *ibid*; enters the church—ordained by the Bishop of Norwich, 363; anecdote of the old artilleryman, 364; Mr. Bray's love for the arts, *ibid*; his theological duties and works, 365; notice of his *Lyric Hymns*, with extracts, 367-373.
- Bray, Mrs., rock-basin discovered by; 338. Lines on the wood-dove, ii. 17.
- Brazen Tor, i. 264.
- Breast Laws of the Isle of Man, i. 49.
- Brent Tor, i. 233; signification of Brent, 234; volcanic, 238, 264.
- Bridge, Alpine, in miniature, ii. 385.
- Bridges, primitive, i. 144; ancient British cyclopean bridge, 256.
- Britannia's Pastorals*. See *Browne*.
- Britons, idolatrous worship of, i. 55.
- Bronscombe, Bishop of Exeter, donations to the Abbey of Tavistock, i. 422; notice of tomb, *ibid*.
- Brook, ii. 26.
- Browne, William, the poet, author of *Britannia's Pastorals*, i. 348; lines on his birthplace, 350. Distich to, ii. 14; biographical sketch of, and notice of his works, 184-206; born at Tavistock, contemporary with Shakspeare and Spenser, 186; reasons for his attachment to pastoral poetry, 187; removal to Oxford at fifteen or sixteen, 188; age at which he produced the first part of *Britannia's Pastorals*, *ibid*; becomes tutor to the young Earl of Carnarvon, 190; improvement in his fortunes, 191; his diminutive person, *ibid*; a Royalist, 192; enumeration of his various pieces, *ibid*; allusion to *Lydford Law*, 193; merits and defects of Browne, 197-199; specimens of his poetry, 201-206; his *Loves of the Walls and the Tavy* characterized, 200.
- Browne, the traveller, his silence in company, ii. 341.
- Brydges, Sir Egerton, ii. 195.
- Buckland Monachorum, inscribed stone at, i. 314.
- Bull, Bishop, on the agency of dreams, i. 382.
- Buller, Judge, and the stannators' stone, i. 113; stone at Dennabridge, 125; probable reason for referring the removal to him, 126; removal not made by him, 125.



- Bulmer, Sir F., enormous silver cup presented by, to the city of London, i. 147.
- Burdett, Sir Francis, ii. 341; remark on Horne Tooke's being put into a passion, 343.
- Burial rites of the ancient Britons, i. 140.
- Butter of the ancient Britons, celebrity of, i. 347.
- Butterfly, yellow, early appearance of, in Devon, i. 12; its sportive action described, 65. Reflections on the butterfly, ii. 4.
- Cacophagi, i. 237.
- Caduceus of Mercury, supposed origin of, in the British Isles, i. 91.
- Caer Sidi, i. 139.
- Cæsar, testimony of, to the eminence of the ancient British priesthood, i. 48; cuts down the sacred oaks, 93.
- Cairns on Dartmoor, i. 52, 94, 99, 100, 221, 241, 242, 249.
- Cake, Rev. Mr., his care of little Edward Atkyns, ii. 313.
- Calamy, Benjamin, ii. 240; son of the Non-conformist, came into the Established Church, 241.
- Canary, a talking, ii. 290.
- Canute, church preferment heaped by, on Livingus, i. 416.
- Car, fairy, poetical description of, i. 168.
- Carnac, in Brittany, similarity of its position to that of Stonehenge, i. 60; its Druidical temple, in the form of a serpent, 92.
- Carnarvon, Earl of, his gallant death, ii. 190; his education and pursuits, 191.
- Carpenter, Rev. Mr., i. 449.
- Carpenter, Mr. and Mrs., monuments to, in Tavistock church, i. 454.
- Carrington, his sublime portraiture of Dartmoor, i. 62; tribute to, *ibid*; citation from, in allusion to the awful visitation at Widdicombe church, 268.
- Encomium on Devon, ii. 140.
- Carter Foot, story of, ii. 295.
- Carteret, Lord, ii. 256.
- Cascades, ii. 172, 180.
- Cassiterides, what, i. 146.
- Cat, favourite, anecdote of a, ii. 11.
- Cato's distichs, practical facility of adequately translating into English ones, i. 76.
- Cattle, enclosures for protection of, i. 118, 120.
- Cavern, singular, described, i. 218.
- Cedar of Lebanon, elegant appearance of, ii. 7.
- Celtic origin of the British Druids, i. 42; similarity of construction between Celtic antiquities of Dartmoor and those of Sweden, *ibid*; comparative resemblance of the Celts and Druids in the art of eloquence, 46, 47; and in the custom of transmitting their laws by tradition, 49; similarity between Celtic and Jewish idolatry, 87; universality of Celtic manners, 119.
- Ceridwen, celebrated cauldron of, what, i. 142.
- Chaining of books for security, i. 447.
- Chair, stone, described and figured, i. 127.
- Chariot-races, British, i. 134.
- Charity, English, commended by Espriella, ii. 281; remarks on ancient charities, and on their commutations, *ibid*; general review of the charities of Tavistock, 282.
- Charles, Prince, afterwards Charles II., in the West, during the Great Rebellion, ii. 221-225; tradition of the pottery equestrian figures, 233; of his hiding-place, *ibid*.
- Charles, I., eminence of the Reformed divines down to his days, i. 431. Political and religious state of England at the commencement of his reign, ii. 208; its flourishing condition, 209; outcry against the Church, 210.
- Charles II., and the climate of Tavistock, i. 4.
- Charming adders, i. 90; exercised by the Druids, 91.
- Charms, mystical, for curing diseases, i. 288.
- Childe, of Plymstock, his tomb, and story of his horse, i. 387; distich by which he willed his land, 388; when he lived, 389.
- Children, fortunes of, regulated by the day of the week on which born, ii. 120.
- Chillingworth's remark on Raleigh, i. 431.
- Cholera, melancholy instance of two deaths by, ii. 279.
- Christianity, remarks on its progress in the West, i. 352; benefits of civilization conferred by, 354; barbarous rites extirpated by, *ibid*; general view of its establishment, 355; its self-subduing

- spirit, and gentle virtues, 376; blessings conferred by, *ibid.*
- Chrysostom, beautiful remark of, on the operations of the Divine Spirit, ii. 2.
- Church, incalculable benefits of, in the extirpation of paganism, i. 354; excellence and glory of the Reformed Church, 430; curious church records, 441. State of the Church previous to the Great Rebellion, ii. 209; fall and restoration of the Church, 211, 212; picturesque beauty of old churches, and liberality of the wealthy in building them, 262.
- Churchwarden accounts, specimens of ancient, i. 441-443, 445-449.
- Churchyard, reflections on visiting, ii. 272.
- Cicero, censure on Homer, for his manner of treating the gods, i. 377.
- Circle, stone, i. 52, 60, 94; magical, 90; cyclopean stone-circles of the Damnonii, account of forty, 150; Druidical, &c., 116, 118, 119, 127, 139, 149, 156, 231, 233, 239, 248, 254, 255 (see *Hut Circles*).
- Civilization, its benefits, i. 353.
- Clack, Rev. Mr., ii. 312.
- Clarence, Duke of, anecdote of Mr. Bray being in company with, ii. 322.
- Clarendon's sketch of Lord Carnarvon, ii. 190.
- Clarke, Dr., i. 42; basaltic phenomena described by, 109.
- "Cleopatra's Needle," ii. 15.
- Clergy of the Reformation, remarks on, i. 429; their degradation and impoverishment, *ibid.*
- Clergyman's daughter, story of, i. 252.
- Climate of Tavistock, mildness of, i. 6.
- Coins found, i. 115.
- Coach of bones, ii. 148, 233.
- Cox Tor, i. 219; ruins on, 220; a trap mountain, 264.
- Cole, John, epitaph on, i. 236.
- Collacombe, vast number of panes of glass in, ii. 262.
- Colling, Mary, and her poetry, i. 171. Interesting story by, ii. 104; rustic superstitions noticed by, 117, 127; letter to Mrs. Bray, 129; amiable character, and efforts at improvement, 289.
- Commerce of the ancient Britons, i. 146.
- Comus* of Milton, hint of, why not borrowed from Browne's *Circe*, ii. 198.
- Conjuring time on Dartmoor, i. 36, 37.
- Connection between the remains of British antiquity and the early history of the country, i. 51.
- Consumption, pulmonary, rarity of, on Dartmoor, i. 12.
- Coombe, beautiful valley of, ii. 402.
- Coombe-Martin, silver mine of, i. 147.
- Cornwall, why so called, and considered a part of Wales, i. 73.
- Cotgrave, Capt., anecdote of a pony, i. 63.
- Cottage, Devonshire, picture of beautiful, ii. 3.
- Courtenay, Lord, marries an innkeeper's daughter, ii. 312.
- Courtenay, Sir William, ii. 284.
- Courtenay, Mr., i. 289.
- Courtenay's, Lord, Belvidere, i. 241.
- Cowsick, inscriptions for a rock and island in the river, i. 81; bridge over the Cowsick, 129.
- Cramp-eaters, i. 236; cramps, what, 237.
- Cranmere Pool, the source of the Tavy, i. 243.
- Crapp, Mr., ii. 167, 282; procures the establishment of the Dispensary at Tavistock, 284.
- Cream, scalded, or clouted, its great celebrity in all ages, i. 347.
- Creation, contemplation of, ii. 2; the study of, inexhaustible, 187.
- Credulity, remarkable instance of, i. 244; the vice of former ages, 382.
- Conchables, i. 9, ii. 129.
- Cricket's cry, considered ominous by the peasantry, i. 276.
- Criminals, immolation of, to the British gods, i. 105.
- Crocker, family of, i. 108.
- Crockern Tor, the seat of British jurisprudence, i. 106; described, 109; account of, from Mr. Bray's Journal, 108-117; judge's chair, 112; Parliament Rock, 113; its site, and why chosen by the miners as the chief station for holding their stannary courts, 117.
- Cromlechs, i. 52, 119; extraordinary, 120; purposes to which cromlechs were devoted, 136, 155; meaning of the word, 137, 155; fallen cromlech, 138; described by Mr. Bray, 155.
- Crook, explained, i. 23; the devil's tooth-pick, 24.
- Crosses, ancient British, i. 255, 403.

- Crow Tor, i. 115.
- Crowndale, birthplace of Sir Francis Drake, i. 13. Beautiful valley of, ii. 19; picturesque views in, 25; derivation of the name, 29.
- Crystals of Dartmoor, i. 262.
- Cuckoo lambs, i. 64; cuckoo's note ominous, and rude rhymes on the cuckoo, 282.
- Cudlipp Town, ii. 405.
- Cursus, stone-circles near a, i. 118; Cursus, or Via Sacra, near Merrivale Bridge, described, 132, 139; plan of that near Merrivale Bridge, 133; notice of others, 133; account of Merrivale Cursus by Mr. Bray, 153.
- Damnonia, remarks on the introduction of Christianity in, i. 352.
- Damnonii, descent and origin, i. 39; early civilization, 40; upheld the priesthood of Druidism, 55; idolatrous worship of, 56; records of the history and religious rites of their priests, 61; stone-circles for the protection of their cattle, 118; excellence of their flocks, 121; their tin-traffic with the Phœnicians, *ibid*; nature and extent of their commerce, 146.
- Danes, date of their arrival in England, and ravages committed by them, i. 409; battle with Egbert, 410; burn cathedral and palace in Cornwall, 413; surprise Tavistock, 414; enter the Tamar, and burn the abbey of Tavistock, 415.
- Danes Combe, i. 410.
- Dartmoor, probably the ancient spelling, i. 281.
- Dartmoor, its heights, their characteristics and effects, i. 5; no person born and bred on Dartmoor known to die of pulmonary consumption, 12; historic notice of Dartmoor, its extent, antiquities, scenery, &c., 16, *et seq.*; its wild animals, 34; Fenwell rights, 35; banditti, *ibid*; mists, 36; extremes in its weather, 37; spoiliations of its ancient structures, 51; devastations committed in a drunken frolic, 52, 53; antiquities and history, 54; fitness of the locality for Druidical rites and ceremonies, 55; secrecy and mystery in the institutions of the Druids, 57; Dartmoor Forest, 57, 58; vegetation, streams, and birds, 58, 59; rocks, granite, and tors, 60; sublimity of the scenery of Dartmoor, 61; regret at the indifference for, 62; morning on, 62; its animals, 63, 293; entomology, 64, 276; birds, 65, 66, 274, 300; reflections, 66; Bair Down, 68; inscriptions of, 68, 74-84; Dartmoor, the last impenetrable retreat of the bards, 100; tribunal of justice, 103; ancient courts of justice described, 104; stannary table, 110, 126; judge's chair, 112; rock-basin, and tolmen, 114; notices of various tors, 113, *et seq.*; Grimspound, 117; granitic enclosures, 119; the Damnonii, 120; Denabridge Pound, 126; circle, 127; fossil oak, 128; circles, cursus, &c., near Merrivale Bridge, 132, 149; Druidical processions, 133; chariot races, 134; fallen cromlech, 136; stone of sacrifice, 138; mythological ark, and helio-arkite ceremonies, 139; barrows, 140; obelisk, 140; sacred wells, 142; rock-basins, 143; rocking or logan stones, and primitive bridges, 144; effects of storms of rain, 145; ancient trackways, 146; silver mines, 147; remnants of ancient customs, 147; potato market, 150; bogs and mists, 158; pixy freaks, 159; antiquity and origin of fairies, 161; excursion to the Warren in search of the King's Oven, 250; elevation of the southern hills, 260; minerals and ignes fatui, 260; fossils, &c., 261; loadstone, 263; earthquake, 265; legendary story of the Widdecombe storm, 268; storms, 269; botany and vegetation, 270; insects and fishes, 276; reptiles, 277; vestiges of ancient customs, 280; May-fires, 281; May-day, 282; the hobby, 283; spirit of the harvest, 285; vestiges of Druidism, 288; sacred plants, *ibid*; charms, *ibid*; saluting the apple-tree, 290; the last of October, 291; rudeness of the peasantry, 292; the trachea of the gooseander and the dundiver, 311. Notice of minerals of, by Mr. Pearse, ii. 374.
- Days, ominous, description of, ii. 120.
- Dead, stone-memorials of the, i. 140. Practice of erecting memorials for, ii. 15.
- Decoction of sacred herbs, i. 142.
- Deer, red, of Devon, i. 294.

- De Foe, incident adopted by, ii. 45.  
 Deities of the ancient Britons, i. 55.  
 De Lille, Abbé, anecdotes of, ii. 336.  
 Dennabridge Pound, i. 117; general description, 123; stone at the Pound described, and opinions respecting it, 127.  
 Desenfant, Mr., his collection of pictures, ii. 334.  
 Devil, legend of his riding into Widdecombe church, i. 268; stories of the devil, ii. 113-117.  
 Devil's toothpick, i. 24.  
 Devon, Earl of, the title, when created, i. 96.  
 Devon, loyalty of the gentry of the county during the Great Rebellion, ii. 212.  
 Devonians, custom of softening words, i. 114.  
 Devonshire, climate, i. 4; great mildness of, 12; etymology and origin of name, 40, 323; minerals, fossils, crystals, &c., 260; ecclesiastical history of Devon, 355. General character of a Devonshire cottage, ii. 3; present belief of the peasantry in witchcraft, 29.  
 Dictionary, ancient, chaining of, in the school-house, i. 447.  
 D'Israeli, Mr., communication to, respecting the Grenville Letters, ii. 256.  
 Dissolution of monasteries, i. 428.  
 Distaff, mode of expressing the weaker sex by the term, ii. 186.  
 Distich, English, specimens of, 79-84. Various, on persons of eminence, ii. 13, 14.  
 Divination by the entrails of human beings abolished by Christianity, i. 354.  
 Divines, great, of the Reformed and Established Church, enumeration of, i. 431.  
 Divining or dowsing rod, its inutilty, ii. 381.  
 Dobb, his merits and docility, ii. 394.  
 Dobuni, their locality, and derivation of the name, i. 323.  
 Doney, Mr., account of, ii. 19-25.  
 Dormer, Robert, Earl of Carnarvon, ii. 190.  
 Double Water, romantic spot of, ii. 383.  
 Down-house, pixy pit at, i. 172.  
 Dowsing, futile superstition of, ii. 381.  
 Drake, Sir Francis, his birth-place, i. 23. Distich on, ii. 14; description of the cottage in which he was born, 28; traditions of Drake, 29-34; shooting the gulf, 31; biography of Drake, 36-102; his father, 38; first voyage, 40; vow of vengeance on Spaniards, 42; at Nombre de Dios, 46-49; Carthage, 51; death of his brothers, 57; at Panama, 60; capture of treasure, 66; voyage of circumnavigation, 72-95; knighted by Elizabeth, 96; defeat of Armada, 98; last voyage, 99; death, 100.  
 Dramatizing any remarkable incident, former custom of, ii. 146.  
 Drawing, advantages of a knowledge of, i. 271.  
 Drayton, description of fairies and fairy houses, i. 160; his tales characterized, 169.  
 Dreams, remarks on the spiritual agency of, i. 382; dreams monitory, *ibid*; Orduhp's, 383.  
 Dress of the Druids, i. 49.  
 Drew, its signification, and derivation, i. 137.  
 Drewsteignton cromlech, i. 137.  
 Druids, celebrity of, at the time of Cæsar's invasion, i. 41; similarity of origin between the Druids, Celts, and Cyclops, 42; historic notice of the Druids and the Druidical system, *ibid*; Druidical eloquence, 46; learning, 47; schools, 50, 56; superstitions, 50; adaptation of Dartmoor to the idolatrous rites and worship of the Druids, 55; Druidical groves, 57, 88, 93; augury, 58, 87, 141; causes of the splendid remains of Druidical art on Salisbury Plain, 60; sublimity amidst which the Druids moved in the Dartmoor scenery, 61; divisions of their order, 74; inscriptions on the metempsychosis, and Druidical maxims, 77-82; magic wands, 90; amulets, 91; courts of judicature, 103; administration of justice, and human sacrifices, 105; processions on Druidical festivals, 133; Druidical initiation, 137; sacred ship, 139; Druidical circles described, 149; lustrations, 202; pretended miracles with the logan stones, 203; Druidical seat of judgment, and extraordinary power arrogated by the Druids, 210; sacred cemetery, 232; notices of various Druidical ceremonies observed on particular

- days, 280; vestiges of Druidism, 284, 290; terrific Druidical rites, 291; causes of the retention of Druidism in the West, 352.
- Duke, 'black-winged,' i. 276.
- Dun, a hill, i. 73.
- Dundiver, notice of, with figure of its trachea, i. 311.
- Dunstan, St., i. 393-397.
- Dye, scarlet moss used for, i. 121.
- Dying Miller*, a Christmas play, ii. 117.
- Dynington, John, i. 423.
- Eagle, black, of Dartmoor, i. 59, 300; its nest never discovered, 59; high character of the Roman conquests depicted by, 353.
- Earl, court, office, and duties of, i. 358, 359.
- Earth, red, brilliant, of Devon, i. 262.
- Earthquake, an, i. 265.
- Easter eve, custom of sending new gloves on, ii. 119.
- Eastern idolatry, seats of, i. 86; origin of temples of unhewn stone, 102.
- Eden, poetical description of, ii. 6.
- Edgar and Elfrida, story of, i. 359-374.
- Edgcumbe, Lieut., ii. 286.
- Edgcumbe, Wm., benefactions of, i. 422.
- Edward, King, where slain, i. 368; where buried, and whither transferred, *ibid.*
- Edward II. banished the Jews, i. 147.
- Edward III., resources derived from the silver mines, i. 147.
- Edward VI., remarks on his early death, i. 430.
- Edwards, the bookseller, his library, ii. 324.
- Edwy Atheling, i. 420.
- Egbert, defeats the Danes and the men of Cornwall, i. 410.
- Egg, serpent's, superstition traced to, i. 91; connexion of the Druidical egg with the Arkite mysteries, 92.
- Ejection of a minister for eating custard pudding in a slovenly manner, ii. 283.
- Elford, the Royalist, account of his cavern, i. 218. Further notice of, ii. 276.
- Elfrida, beautiful, where born, i. 352; story of Elfrida and Ethelwold, 359-369; nunneries founded by, as an atonement for her crime, 368; remarks on Mason's *Elfrida*, 370-374; Elfrida's dislike of Dunstan, 396.
- Elgin marbles, hogged manes of the horses of, i. 122.
- Elizabeth, Queen, enlightened policy pursued by, respecting the silver mines of Devon, i. 147; honorary monument to, in Tavistock church, i. 453; inscription given, *ibid.*
- Eloquence of the Druids, how symbolized, i. 46.
- Enchantment, fairy, story of, i. 178.
- Enclosures, enormous granite, i. 117.
- Endsleigh, description of cottage and surrounding scenery, ii. 400.
- England, state of, previous to the Great Rebellion, ii. 209.
- Erasmus' *Paraphrase*, original cost of, i. 447.
- Espriella, his ingenuity as a narrator, ii. 280.
- Established Church, eminence of its divines, i. 431.
- Ethelred's charter, i. 392.
- Ethelwold, story, i. 360; murdered, 364; historic doubts as to the scene of his murder, 366.
- Evans, Rev. Mr., beautiful slate in his house, i. 261. His estate and plantations, ii. 389.
- Evelyn's *Silva*, cited, on the transverse section of the trunk of a tree, i. 98.
- Evelyn the first Englishman who brought gardening into a regular art, ii. 5.
- Eustatius, St., paintings in the church of, i. 443.
- Eyes, magic ointment for the, i. 175.
- Fabrics of unhewn stone of Eastern origin, i. 102.
- Fairies, account of, i. 159, *et seq.*; worshipped by the Druids, 162; fairy transformations, 163; stories, 165; car, 168; magic ointment for seeing a fairy, 175 (see also *Pixy*).
- Farrindon, neglect and future revival of his works, i. 431.
- Fathers of the Church, learning indebted to, i. 399.
- Fays of Dartmoor, i. 147.
- Fenwell rights, i. 35.
- Feud, extraordinary, between the Tavistock and Okehampton people, ii. 295.
- Fice's well, i. 142, 256.
- Fiddlers and the devil, tales of, ii. 116.

- Filial piety, remarks on, ii. 19.  
 Fire, sacred to the British Ceres, i. 138;  
 fire-begging, notice of, 291.  
 Fits, superstitious cure for, ii. 124.  
 Fitz, of Fitzford, tale of, i. 171; monu-  
 ment and arms of John Fitz, 452.  
 Distich to the family of, ii. 14; John  
 Fitz and Slanning, 151; suicide of Sir  
 John, 226; loyalty to Charles of the old  
 house of Fitzford, 214.  
 Fitzford, subterraneous passage at, ii. 128;  
 capture of Fitzford by Lord Essex, 226,  
 235.  
 Fitz's well, i. 142; visit to, 256; bio-  
 graphical notice of the Fitzes, 257.  
 Flint axes found on Dartmoor, i. 146.  
 Flowers; enchanted, i. 180; wild, enumera-  
 tion of beautiful, 272. Universal love  
 of, ii. 3.  
 Folly Orchard, why named, i. 434.  
 Forest, its real significance, i. 97.  
 Foresta, definition of, i. 57.  
 Forests, adaptation of, for purposes of  
 mystery, i. 58.  
 Fortescues of Buckland Filleigh, curious  
 blunders on the monument of one of the,  
 i. 454.  
 Fortibus, William de, Earl of Albemarle,  
 i. 96.  
 Fortibus, Isabella, tradition of her planting  
 Wistman's Wood, i. 96; *not* planted by  
 her, 97.  
 Fountains, sacred, i. 142.  
 Fox, seen to chase a hare, i. 243; reward  
 for killing one in 1673, 447.  
 Foxglove, magnificent appearance of, in  
 Devon, i. 272; white, decoction of, used  
 as an emetic, *ibid.*  
 Friday, superstitions respecting, ii. 120.  
 Froissart, error in locality by, i. 369.  
 Froude, Archdeacon, attempt to discover  
 the age of a tree by the microscope, i. 97.  
 Fulford, Baldwin, and the Fulford family,  
 ii. 314.  
 Fuller, pleasant remark on the increase of  
 the Benedictines, i. 394. His reference  
 to Scaliger, ii. 237.  
 Funeral memorials of the ancient Britons,  
 i. 140; custom at Tavistock, 190. Super-  
 stitious notion of funeral walking, 451.  
 Furniture, curious ancient, described, ii.  
 251.  
 Fur Tor, basin on, i. 245.  
 Furze, wild, magnificent appearance of,  
 i. 272.  
 Furzestown, grotesque aspect of, ii. 415.  
 Furze Chatterer, i. 275.  
 Fuseli's *Nightmare*, effects of the print of,  
 on the mind, ii. 259.  
 Fynes, Red-post, his character and extra-  
 ordinary ignorance, ii. 316.  
 Garan Hu, the Charon of Britain, i. 137.  
 Garden, love of, common with amiable  
 persons, ii. 1; general prevalence in  
 England of a taste for gardening, 3;  
 great men who delighted in gardens, 4.  
 Garland Day, ii. 121.  
 Gates, ancient administration of justice  
 in, i. 106.  
 Geach, Dr., epitaph on a faithful priest,  
 ii. 255.  
 Geology and Mineralogy of Dartmoor, i.  
 260; ii. 374.  
 Ghost story, ii. 129.  
 Giants, once masters of the hill country of  
 Devonshire, i. 94.  
 Gidley, circles at, 116.  
 Gigantic bones discovered, and their di-  
 mensions, i. 438.  
 Gladdy, i. 274.  
 Glanville, Judge, monument of, i. 453; ii.  
 142; mutilation by Parliamentary forces,  
*ibid.* Distich to, ii. 14; account of, 140-  
 144; legend concerning, 144-146, 154-156.  
 Glanville, Dame, effigy of, ii. 143.  
 Glanville, Sir John, Sergeant, ii. 156-168;  
 his Charity, 167.  
 Glanville, Francis, ii. 164.  
 Glanville, Joseph, where born, ii. 111; his  
*Book on Wytches*, *ibid.*  
 Glanville family, and last of the Glanvilles,  
 ii. 170.  
 Glass ship, in the Helio-arkite mysteries,  
 i. 133, 139.  
 Gloves, new, custom of sending on Easter  
 eve, ii. 119.  
 Godo, the British Ceres, procession to, i.  
 133; fire consecrated to her worship,  
 138.  
*Gododin*, poem of, characterized, i. 134;  
 enumeration of incidents in, for a poem  
 in the style of *Madoc*, 135.  
 Gods, of barbarous nations, fierce and  
 bloody, i. 376; how treated by Homer,  
 377.

- Godwin, Earl, treachery of, i. 418.
- Good Friday, superstitious notions respecting, among the peasantry, ii. 119.
- Gooseander, dissection of, with figure of its trachea, i. 311.
- Gorseddau, spot of the, described, i. 104.
- Gospel, civilizing effects from the preaching of, i. 354.
- Granite, abundance of, on Dartmoor, i. 52; masses strewn on the Moor, 60; causes of its taking the convex or gibbous form, 214; composition of various kinds of granite, 260, 263.
- Gray, the poet, anecdotes of, ii. 337; handwriting, 337; averseness to publication, 338; annotations on Pindar, 339; remarks on Plato, 340; few alterations in his *Ode on the Progress of Poesy*, arising from long previous meditation, *ibid*; profundity of his knowledge, *ibid*; his regret at his ignorance of mathematics, *ibid*.
- Graves of the Caledonians and Britons, i. 140.
- Great Rebellion, notices of the, ii. 208.
- Grenofen, house and valley, ii. 383.
- Grenville, Sir Bevil, his chivalrous loyalty, ii. 215; his death, 219; original letters of, discovered, 255.
- Grenville, Sir Richard, arbitrary conduct of, ii. 193; the probable origin of Lydford Law, 194; his careless conduct in the retreat to Launceston, 225; injury to the royal cause from his misconduct, *ibid*; historic notice of Sir Richard, 228-232; his bitterness and malice, 232.
- Grey Wethers, name given to stones at Abury, i. 116.
- Grimbal, Betsey. See *Betsey*.
- Grimspound described, i. 117.
- Grot, Pixies', i. 218.
- Grouse, black, i. 306.
- Groves, the seats of Druidical instruction, i. 56; universality of groves among the ancients as places of idolatry, 86; groves in stony places, 95.
- Gubbins, the, i. 236.
- Guile Bridge, i. 389.
- Gull, common, curious migration, i. 310.
- Hair of the dead body, its continued growth, i. 99.
- Halloran, Mr., jealousy between his boys and Mr. Cake's, ii. 318.
- Hals, Lieut.-Col. James, ii. 192.
- Ham, or Ammon, a British deity, i. 56; derivation of *Ham*, *ibid*.
- Hamilton, Lady, her character and person depicted, ii. 341.
- Hampden, wily conduct of, ii. 159.
- Hannaford, farmer, i. 89.
- Hard weather, effects of, i. 11.
- Hardicanute, preference for, by the English, i. 417.
- Harding, Mr., enthusiasm of, ii. 385.
- Harewood forest, i. 370.
- Harold, named heir to the crown by Canute, i. 417.
- Harris, his fearlessness as a preacher, i. 432.
- Harvest, spirit of the, i. 285.
- Haunted house, ii. 129.
- Hay Tor, i. 115, 264.
- Heath-poult. See *Blackbird*, *Moor*.
- Heathfield, legendary tale of, ii. 113.
- Heck-mall, i. 275.
- Helio-arkite god, adder a symbol of the, i. 91.
- Helling, the name for a slate roof, i. 262.
- Hengist, how termed by the Welsh bard, i. 135.
- Hengist Down, origin of the name, i. 410.
- Henry VIII., his conduct and motives in the Reformation, i. 428. Penalties enjoined by his Six Articles, ii. 39.
- Henwood, Thomas, courage in saving a child from drowning, ii. 288; receives the silver medal from the Humane Society, 289.
- Herbs, decoction of, in sacred rites, i. 142; sacred, for charms, 288.
- Hercules, in Gaul, betokened force of eloquence, i. 46.
- Heretoge, or Duke, the office, and derivation of the name, i. 359.
- Hermitage of St. John, account of, i. 405-408.
- Heronry at Warleigh, i. 308.
- Heron, purple, i. 308.
- Herring, Brigadier, notice of, ii. 306.
- Hertford Bridge, ii. 389.
- Hertha, goddess, superstitious reverence for, i. 50.
- Hessory-tor, i. 55.
- Hesus, God of Battles of the ancient Britons, i. 55; criminals sacrificed to, 105.
- Higher White Tor, i. 113.

- Hill Bridge, ii. 408.  
 Hinge of a door, probable origin of the word, i. 78.  
 Historical blunders, specimens of, i. 370; value of historical plays and novels when they adhere to truth, 371.  
 Hobby, i. 301.  
 Hobby-horse, i. 283.  
 Hody, Judge, ii. 154.  
 Holiday sports, ii. 119.  
 Homer, Cicero's censure of, i. 377.  
 Honey-buzzard, i. 65.  
 Honey-stealing by fairies and pixies, ii. 203.  
 Hoop, i. 275.  
 Hopton, Sir Ralph, victory obtained by, ii. 217; at Stratton Heights, 219.  
 Horrabridge, picturesque view of, ii. 412.  
 Horse Bridge, conjecture concerning, i. 410; its beauty and situation, 411.  
 Horse-furniture, magnificent set of, ii. 253.  
 Horses, wild, of Dartmoor, picturesque beauty of, i. 63, 122; the supposed organs of the gods, in ancient idolatry, 87; dedication of horses to the sun, and probable derivation of the hobby, 283.  
 Hound starting at midnight, ii. 149.  
 House-marten, industry of, described, ii. 202.  
 Howard, Lady, the theme of modern tradition, i. 448. Stories of, ii. 148; history of, 226-233; her numerous marriages, beauty, and wealth, 227; married to Sir Richard Grenville, 228; time of her death uncertain, 233.  
 Hu, the Bacchus of the Druids, i. 53; description of the ceremonies in procession to, 134.  
 Hu Gadran, 'the peaceful ploughman,' i. 79.  
 Huckworthy, scenery at, i. 216, ii. 413.  
 Human victims, sacrificial immolation of, i. 105.  
 Hurd, Bishop, tutor to the Prince of Wales, ii. 332.  
 Hurdwick, Baron, i. 233; one of the titles of the Duke of Bedford, 424.  
 Hut-rings and circles on Dartmoor, i. 52, 100, 116, 118, 150, 231, 233.  
 Jack-in-the-bush, i. 283.  
 Jago, Rev. Dr., i. 12. Stories related by, ii. 148.  
 Ictis, port, probably St. Nicholas Isle, Plymouth Sound, i. 146.  
 Jeffries, Judge, not the originator of Lydford Law, ii. 193; the court-room at Lydford visited by his ghost in the shape of a black pig, 194.  
 Jerningham, the poet, notice of, ii. 331.  
 Jews, flourishing state of the silver-mines of Devon under their management, i. 147.  
 Imagination, vigorous, of the Druids, i. 45.  
 Ina's Coombe, poetical allusion to, ii. 204.  
 Infidelity, the vice of the present age, i. 382.  
 Initiation, Druidical, i. 137.  
 Inscribed stones, Mr. Bray's letter concerning, i. 313-337.  
 Inscriptions, rural, on the granite at Bairdown, i. 74; Druidical and other inscriptions, 77-84; inscriptions on monumental stones and pillars, 140; ancient, 317, 321, 327, 330, 333, 336. Garden inscriptions, ii. 13.  
 John, Mr. St., portrait of the sister of, ii. 249.  
 John, St., hermitage of, notice of, i. 405; well of, 407. Romantic scenery of, ii. 9; grant of the chapel by the Earl of Bedford, 1677, ii. 283.  
 Johnes, Rev. Thomas, on the animals, &c., of Dartmoor, i. 292; on its birds, 300.  
 Ireland, stone-memorials of, vestiges of Druidical inscriptions on, i. 49; the stones of Stonehenge said to be brought from Ireland, 78.  
 Judge's Chair, on Crockern-tor, i. 112.  
 Judgment-seat, Druidical, i. 156, 210.  
 Judicature, ancient British, seats of, i. 105.  
 Jurisprudence of primitive nations, i. 50; ancient British seat of, 100, 105.  
 Justice of the Druids, testimony to, i. 50; courts of, described, 105, 106.  
 Karnbrê, judgment seat at, i. 210.  
 Karn. See *Cairn*.  
 Kempe, Mrs. Anne, ii. 18.  
 Kempe, A. John, i. 3; Mr. Kempe on the *ihu*, 336; etymology of the name Tavistock, 348.  
 Kestrel, i. 301.  
 Kieve, its signification, i. 99.  
 Kilworthy, ii. 133-140.  
 King's Arms, story of the vintner's daughter of the, ii. 236.



- King's Evil, charms for curing, ii. 125.  
 King's Oven, excursion in search of, i. 250; discovery and description of the Oven, 254.  
 Kistvaen, i. 99, 154; account of one on Bair-down, 343, 344.  
 Kite, i. 300; anecdote of one, i. 301.  
 Kitt's Steps, ii. 180.  
 Knight, Mr., the librarian, ii. 286.  
 Knighthood, custom in Drake's time of making presents on receiving, ii. 97.  
 Lady, young, and the hounds, traditionary tale of, ii. 113.  
 Lambs, instinct of, i. 63.  
 Lamerton, picturesque sketch of, ii. 262.  
 Lansdown, battle of, ii. 220.  
 La Roche, Miss, providential escape of, ii. 315.  
 Launceston, disorderly retreat to, ii. 225.  
 Law-courts of the Druids, i. 105.  
 Laws, traditionary, of ancient nations, i. 49.  
 Learning, eminent, of the ancient British priesthood, i. 47; of the Benedictine monks, 399.  
 Lebanon, picturesque appearance of the cedar of, ii. 8.  
 Leat, its meaning in Devonshire, i. 216.  
 Legend of the old trees of Dartmoor, i. 96.  
 Legends, fairy. See *Fairies*, *Pixies*, and *Tales*.  
 Lent-crocking, notice of the sport, ii. 119.  
 Lewknor, Mr. Thomas, a preaching minister, ii. 215; favour shown him by the Parliamentary party, 283.  
 Lydford burnt, i. 415.  
 Lydford Cascade, account of, ii. 172; bridge, 176; antiquities of Lydford, 178; castle, 179; law, 192; origin of saying, 193.  
 Light and shade, beautiful effects of, on the lofty tors, i. 246.  
 Lille, Abbé de, ii. 336.  
 Limebarrow, i. 242.  
 Linnæus, i. 271.  
 Literature, how far indebted to the Benedictines, i. 399.  
 Littlebee Tor, i. 113.  
 Littleford Tor, i. 100.  
 Livingus, i. 416-420; horrible storm at his death, 420. Presageful thunders when about to expire, ii. 13.  
 Loadstone, Dartmoor, i. 263.  
 Local scenery, its influence on the mind of a poet, ii. 187.  
 Logan stones, that of Cornwall overthrown by a lieutenant in the navy, i. 53, 339; ordeal of the logan, 105; purposes for which used by the artful Druids, 144; signification of logan in Cornish, 203; pretended miracles with the logan stones in the hands of the Druids, *ibid*.  
 Long, Mr., his little son rescued from drowning, ii. 288.  
 Long Betor, i. 241.  
 Long-cripple snake, i. 277.  
 Longevity, instance of, i. 237. At Tavistock, ii. 296.  
 Longford Tor, notice of, i. 113, 115.  
 Lopes, Sir Ralph, i. 315.  
 Lot and Sprig Alphabets of the Druids, i. 49.  
 Lots of divination, i. 143.  
 Love, inconstancy of friendship in, i. 360.  
 Love-named plants, i. 274.  
 Lower-white Tor, i. 113.  
 Lucan, impression made on the Roman soldiery by the sacred oaks, i. 93.  
 Lucian, beautiful allegory told by, i. 46.  
 Luggars, brothers, melancholy effects of superstition on, i. 451.  
 Luminous mineral evaporations, i. 260.  
 Luscombe, Jane, ii. 274.  
 Lustrations, Druidical, i. 143, 338.  
*Lycidas*, of Milton, on what said to be modelled, ii. 189.  
 Lyde, Rev. George, his undaunted conduct during the storm, i. 267.  
*Lyric Hymns*, notice of, with extracts, ii. 367.  
 Mad woman, traditionary story by, respecting the Great Rebellion, ii. 235.  
 Magic, pagan, i. 90; magic wands of the Druids, 91; ointment for the eyes, 175.  
 Manatons, and the Manaton service, ii. 166.  
 Manes, beautiful, i. 122; deformity caused by cropping the manes of horses, *ibid*.  
 Manganese of Dartmoor, i. 260.  
 Marbles of Devonshire, i. 261.  
 Maristow, church of, ii. 243.  
 Martens in Christmas week, at Plympton, i. 7.  
*Martyrology*, chaining of the, for security, i. 447, 449.

- Mary Overy, St., far-fetched etymology of, i. 340.
- Mary Tavy Rock, its beautiful appearance, ii. 406.
- Mason, the freebooter, ii. 409.
- Mason's *Elfrida*, i. 370; destruction of historical truth in, 372; its merits as a poem, *ibid.* Mason lamented his ignorance of mathematics, ii. 340.
- Mathematical figure on sand of supposed uninhabited island, i. 130.
- Mathias, Mr., origin of the friendship between him and Mr. Bray, ii. 321.
- May, 29th of, holiday of, ii. 121.
- May-day, high festival to the sun on, i. 281; May-fires, *ibid.*; sacrifices on May-eve, 282; celebration of May-day, 283.
- Maynard, Sir John, notice of, ii. 171.
- Mazed finch, i. 275.
- Meavy oak described, ii. 266; account of the village, 267, 268.
- Mercury's caduceus, its origin in Britain, i. 91.
- Merlin's Cave, inscription for a rock near, i. 76; legend of Merlin's origin and magic powers, 78.
- Merrivale Bridge, circles, &c., near, described, i. 133; further account of the circles of stone, 149, 230; derivation of the word Merrivale, 253; fate of the rocks close to, 342.
- Metempsychosis, Druidical, i. 80.
- Midsummer-day, old, custom of the farmers on, i. 291. Rustic superstitions practised on, ii. 120.
- Milton's description of Satan's journey, i. 124; of Eden, ii. 6; his *Lycidas*, on what said to have been modelled, 189; *Comus*, why not derived from *Circe*, 198.
- Mineralogy of Dartmoor, i. 260.
- Mining and mines of Dartmoor, i. 146, 147; ii. 374; superstition of the miners, 379, 380.
- Mistle thrush, i. 303.
- Mistletoe, custom of cutting by the Druids, i. 88; rarity on the oak, and where seen by Mr. Southey, 290.
- Mis Tor, i. 56; described, 228; Mis Tor Pan, popular legend respecting, *ibid.*
- Mists of Dartmoor, i. 36, 159; dangers from sudden mists, 192.
- Mithra, or Misor, sun worshipped under the name of, i. 56.
- Mona, island in the river Cowsick, i. 81.
- Monasteries, the utility and abuse of, i. 377; evils of monastic observances, 380; literary benefits accruing from monasteries, 399; reflections on the ruins of, 404; evils attendant on the dissolution of monasteries, 427-430.
- Montesinos, his opinion on monachism, i. 380.
- Moore, Dr., i. 7, 65.
- Moral touchstone, as used by the Druids, i. 227.
- Morasteen, stone-tribunal at, i. 106.
- More, Sir Thomas, his opinion of monachism, i. 379.
- Moreton Hampstead, etymology, i. 10 dinner-custom at, ii. 314.
- Morning walk on Dartmoor, i. 62.
- Morwell House, ii. 413.
- Morwell Rock, magnificent aspect of, ii. 400.
- Moss, beautiful scarlet used for dye, i. 121.
- Mount Tavy, its picturesque locality, ii. 388.
- Mutilation of church effigies by the Covenanters, ii. 244.
- Myrtles, extraordinary, i. 7.
- Names, number and order of among the Romans, i. 317; light thrown on a place by a name, 412.
- Nathan's, St., Kieve, i. 99.
- Nature, the world of, a true poet's chief delight, ii. 195; noble effects of the view of Nature on his feelings, 196.
- Newton, Sir Isaac, alleged futility of his disclaimer of hypothesis, ii. 329.
- Nightingale, not known in Devon, i. 351.
- Nursery-songs, antiquarian value of, ii. 110.
- Oak chest, story of the, i. 27.
- Oaks, fossil, of Dartmoor, i. 58, 128; singular appearance of the oaks in Wistman's Wood, 92, 94; violation of the oaks by Cæsar, 93; discovery of an oak's age by its rings, 97; oaken bowls of the ancient Britons, 129. Holiday sport of cutting oak boughs, ii. 121; description of the curious and majestic Meavy oak, 266.
- Obelisks, i. 52, 115, 133, 141; memorials of the dead, i. 140; inscribed obelisk in

- Mr. Bray's garden, 316; figure, 318.  
 "Cleopatra's Needle," ii. 15.  
 Oblivion, reflections on, i. 408.  
 October, last of, terrific Druidical festival on, i. 291.  
 Ointment, magic, i. 175.  
 Okehampton Castle, tradition respecting, i. 414.  
 Old women, traditional charms possessed by, i. 289. See *Tales*.  
 Omens, Druidical, i. 59.  
 Ominous days, rustic, ii. 120.  
 Oratory, eminence of the Druids in, i. 46.  
 Ordeal rock, i. 226.  
 Ordulph, i. 361; wonderful stories of, 383-386; his tomb, 386; gigantic dimensions of his bones, i. 438.  
 Orgar, Earl of Devon, i. 357; date of his death, 383; arms of, 390; died before the conflagration of Tavistock Abbey, 414; his tomb, when rebuilt, 439.  
 Oven. See *King's*.  
 Over Tor, i. 338. Proposed name for the Druidical basin at, ii. 397.  
 Owls, i. 302.  
 Oxenham, legend of the white-breasted bird of, i. 59.  
 Page the miser, ii. 145; opening his coffin, 153.  
 Painting, portrait, revival of the English school of, ii. 248.  
 Panegyrics, introductory, practice of using in the days of Browne, ii. 189.  
 Parish clerk of Tavistock, ii. 19.  
 Parish priest, poverty of, in contrast with the rich monks, i. 424.  
 Park Wood and scenery described, ii. 389.  
 Parliament Rock described, i. 109, 112.  
 Parliamentary forces, devastations committed by, ii. 235.  
 Parrot and the hound, anecdote of, ii. 259.  
 Pass, The, described, ii. 397.  
 Passions, power of expressing by the ancient bards of Britain, i. 47.  
 Paul, St., temper in which he rebuked heathen idolatry, i. 404.  
 Pearse, Mr. Edmund, his museum, ii. 374; notice of local mineralogy, *ibid*.  
 Peasant, softening influence of religion on the, ii. 273.  
 Peasantry of Dartmoor, i. 24.  
 Pembroke, William, Earl of, his strictness in contracting private friendships, ii. 191.  
 Peter Tavy, its beautiful scenery, ii. 402.  
 Peter Tor, notice of, i. 245.  
 Pew Tor, Pewtor Rock and its antiquities, i. 209; cavern, 216.  
 Phalæna Pavonia, i. 276.  
 Philp, George, loss of in the *Vestal*, ii. 286; firmness of his wife, *ibid*.  
 Phœnicians, traffic of with Britain for tin, i. 112, 121.  
 Pictures, cleaning of, not to be attempted by an ignorant person, ii. 249.  
 Picturesque, pleasures derivable from an eye for the, i. 271.  
 Pike, Captain Richard, exploit of, ii. 241.  
 Pins, pricking of, in a man bewitched, i. 244.  
 Piskie House, the sheltering place of Elford, i. 218; excursion to, ii. 274; description of, 276.  
 Pixies of Dartmoor, all mischief referred to, i. 147; their facility of entrance, 148; pixy freaks, 160; derivation of the word, 162; pixy changelings, 166, 167; a pixy house, 167; pixy pit, 172; pixy-led, 173; remedies against it, *ibid*; story of the sage femme and the pixy, 174; of the bucket of fair water, 178; of the enchanted flowers, 180; pixy grot, 218; derivation of *pixy* by Mr. Bray, 286.  
 Pixies' Pool, Kilworthy, ii. 138.  
 Plague at Tavistock, i. 151.  
 Planets, idolatrous notions of Indians respecting, ii. 77.  
 Plympton, Prior of, benefactions to the Abbey of Tavistock, i. 422.  
 Plymstock, Childe of, successful stratagem of the friars to obtain his land, i. 387.  
 Poet, character of the true portrayed, ii. 105.  
 Poetry, genius for, of the bards of Britain, i. 47.  
 Polwhele, Mr., considers that the Romans never penetrated into Dartmoor, i. 101; description of Brent Tor, 238. *Remarks* on the falsehood respecting Judge Glanville, ii. 154.  
 Ponies, Dartmoor, i. 63, 293.  
 Pope, anecdotes of, ii. 331.  
 Portrait painting of the old and modern school, ii. 248.  
 Post Bridge, its vast flat stones, i. 255.

- Potato, historic notice of, i. 151.
- Potter, translator of *Æschylus*, his indigent circumstances, ii. 332; subsequent preferment, 333.
- Prideaux quoted, i. 263.
- Priesthood, ancient, of Britain, their genius for poetry, i. 47; their learning and speculative philosophy, 48; imposing appearance of the Druidical priesthood preparatory to the ceremonial of justice, 105.
- Prince Town, i. 292.
- Printing, date of its introduction into England, i. 456; early printed books at Tavistock, 457.
- Procession, Druidical, i. 133.
- Prout, subject for his pencil, i. 440.
- Punch made in the rock-basins of Dartmoor, i. 53.
- Punchbowl tree, grotesque figure of, ii. 317.
- Pym, the notorious, member for Tavistock, ii. 214.
- Rabbit burrows, singular, notice of, i. 341.
- Radcliffe, Mrs., of Warleigh, notice of extraordinary myrtles, i. 7.
- Rains, heavy, formidable consequences of, on Dartmoor, i. 145.
- Raleigh (nephew of Sir Walter), notice of, and of his sermons, i. 431.
- Raven, considered the harbinger of death, i. 58; the raven banner the figure of the destructive victories of the Danes, 353.
- Raven Rock, romantic locality of, ii. 384.
- Real presence, penalty for denying, ii. 39.
- Rebellion, Great, historic notices of, in connexion with Tavistock, ii. 208-237.
- Red deer of Devonshire, i. 294.
- Red earth of Exeter, its brilliance and fertility, i. 262; Otaheitian tradition, *ibid.*
- Refectory, Tavistock, notice of, i. 435, 438.
- Reformation, devastations committed at the, i. 357; its general effects on human opinion, 376; reflections on the wicked spirit in which it was effected, 404; sins of the Reformation particularized, 428-430.
- Register, Church, notice of early of 1539, i. 449.
- Religion, natural and softening impressions of, on the peasant's mind, ii. 273.
- Religious influence on the affairs of nations, i. 375.
- Retirement, religious, advantages of, i. 379.
- Richardson, author of the *Rolliad*, ii. 324.
- Ring-ouzel, i. 303.
- Risdon, his reputation as an antiquary, i. 366.
- River scenery of Dartmoor, i. 20-22.
- Roasting the shoe, sport of, ii. 120.
- Robin, his tenderness and sympathy, ii. 123.
- Robinson, Mrs., anecdote of the Prince of Wales's rendezvous with, ii. 333.
- Roborough Down, ii. 411.
- Rock-basins of Dartmoor, i. 53; mystical water in, 143; figure and account of rock-basins, 200; their probable use in Druidical superstition, 202; further accounts of rock-basins, 211, 240, 241, 338.
- Rock ordeal, i. 226.
- Rocking stones, purposes of in the hands of the Druids, i. 144; how used, 203; rocking stone near Land's End raised again, 212.
- Roman Catholics, heathen origin of many of the ceremonies of their church, i. 284; imposing character of its rites, 285.
- Romans, the civilization attendant on their conquests, i. 353.
- Roose Tor, derivation of, and account of, i. 221.
- Rose, full-blown, superstitious plucking of, on Midsummer-day, ii. 120.
- Rougemont Castle, whence its name, i. 262.
- Rowdon Wood, picturesque site of, ii. 389; remarkable storm at, *ibid.*
- Rowe, the poet, where born, i. 93; ii. 262; emotions of the poet in contemplating the Tremayne monument, *ibid.*
- Rumon, St., i. 385; his history, 390.
- Rundle, John, Esq., M.P., munificent donation to the Tavistock public library of Tavistock, ii. 285; public and private character, *ibid.*
- Rundle Stone, i. 240.
- Running, extraordinary instance of, i. 244.
- Russell, Lord John, grant of the dissolved Abbey of Tavistock to, i. 433; titles and dignities conferred on, by Henry VIII., *ibid.*; notice of the house of Russell, *ibid.*
- Russell family, pension to the vicar of Tavistock, ii. 215.

- 'Salting un in,' story of, i. 27.  
 Sampford Spiney, tin mines of, i. 260; crystals, 262.  
 Sarcophagus, ancient, i. 438.  
 Saunders, Mr., devastations on the remains of Tavistock committed by, i. 434.  
 Saxon school at Tavistock, i. 455.  
 Saxons, arrival of, and foundation of the West Saxon kingdom in England, i. 410; contests between the Saxons and Britains, 411.  
 Scarlet moss, used for dye, i. 121.  
 Scenery of Dartmoor, i. 57. Beautiful, ii. 270.  
 Schools, Druidical, i. 50.  
 Scymérons, notices of the, ii. 54.  
 Secrecy of the Druidical rites and religion, i. 57.  
 Seneca, defines woman as an animal fond of dress, ii. 143.  
 Serpents, charming, i. 90.  
 Seward, Miss, her mistake respecting Gawthorpe Hall, i. 370.  
 Sexton, singular custom of, i. 451.  
 Sharpytor, i. 248.  
 Sheepstor described, i. 216. Sublime and beautiful scenery on the road to, ii. 268, 270; the valley, 271; church, *ibid*; churchyard, 272; moral reflections on churchyards, *ibid*; the tor of granite, 273; visitation of cholera, 279.  
*Shepherd's Calendar*, cited, ii. 393.  
 Sheridan, his character at the period of Mr. Bray's acquaintance with him, ii. 324.  
 Sheriff, appointment and duties of, i. 358.  
 Shield, his amiability and sensitiveness, ii. 325.  
 Ship, glass. See *Glass*.  
 Shirley, characterized, ii. 220; beautiful monody on the death of Charles I., *ibid*.  
 Shoe, roasting of the, ii. 120.  
 Shoot for shut, used by lower classes in Devonshire, i. 124.  
 Shrove Tuesday, holiday sport on, ii. 119.  
 Shute, etymology of, i. 124.  
 Silver mines of the ancient Britons, i. 146; enormous silver cup presented to the City of London, 147; story of the pixy silver, 178.  
 Sixteenth century, its corruption and immorality, i. 429.  
 Slanning, killed by Fitz, ii. 152.  
 Slanning, Sir Nicholas, ii. 215; extracts from his muster-roll, 216; supplies ammunition from Pendennis, 216, 218; his extraordinary gallantry and death, 219.  
 Slate, valuable, of Dartmoor, i. 261; beautiful specimen of carving in slate, *ibid*.  
 Smith, Mr. Edward, biographical history of, i. 182; his letter to Mr. Bray, 191; visit to Mis Tor, *ibid*.  
 Smith, Sir Sydney, ii. 355, 356, 358.  
 Snow in May, i. 11; story of a deep fall of snow, 8; deaths in Dartmoor snowstorms, 37.  
 Snowdrops, early, in Devon, i. 12.  
 Softening words, mode of, by the people of Devon, i. 114, 281.  
 Sonnet to Wistman's Wood, i. 93.  
 Sortilege, substances used in, i. 142.  
 South Betor, i. 241.  
 Southey, Robert, Esq., Letters to, i. 1; plan of the work suggested by, 1; his opinion of the means by which the tors were formed, 212; not partial to botany, 270; causes of the late establishment of Christianity in the West, 352. On the story of the stone at Drake's marriage, i. 33; on Drake's dealings with the devil, 34; value of traditionary tales and nursery songs, 110.  
 Spenser, his fable of the bramble and the oak inimitable, ii. 198.  
 Sphinx of the Moor, i. 61.  
 Sphinx of Egypt, resemblance to, of Vixen Tor, i. 197.  
 Spires of churches, unknown in the neighbourhood of Tavistock, i. 270.  
 Sports, rustic, notice of, ii. 119.  
 Sprig alphabet of the Druids, i. 49; of Ireland, *ibid*; triad in allusion to, 81.  
 Springs, sacred, of the Druids, i. 58.  
 Squirrel, poetical description of boys hunting the, ii. 202.  
 Stag in chase described, ii. 201.  
 Stamford, Earl of, retires in disorder into Tavistock, ii. 217.  
 Stannary Courts, method of holding, i. 106; great antiquity of, *ibid*; table of the court, and power of the warden, 109, 110; seat of the president of the stannators, 112.  
 Staple Tor, i. 115, 222.

- Story, romantic, i. 252.
- Stennen hill, barrows on, i. 115.
- Stevens's grave, i. 245.
- Still-house, the, ii. 16.
- Stone, fabrics of unhewn, of Eastern origin, i. 103; those of Dartmoor, 104; use of stone-memorials by nations of antiquity, *ibid*; stone-seats of judgment, 105; stone-table of the court of stannators, 109; present state of, 110; cyclopean stone-enclosures, 117; ancient massy stone-chair described and figured, 127; stone-circles, 133; those near Merivale Bridge, 138; stone-hedges, how formed, 150; inscribed stones, 317, 321, 327; stones used as barriers in public games, 319.
- Stonehenge, reasons for its pre-eminence as a Druidical antiquity, i. 60; meaning of the term Stonehenge, 78; treacherous slaughter of the ancient Britons near, 135; a temple of the sun, 138.
- Stone-knocker, notice of, i. 276.
- Storm, violent, at Widdicombe, i. 266. Remarkable, ii. 389.
- Storm-thrush, ii. 11.
- Stothard, Mr. sen., i. 271.
- Stow, original letters found at, ii. 255.
- Stratton Heights, battle of, ii. 213, 214, 219.
- Strike, its signification in the Devonshire vocabulary, i. 179.
- Stuart, Walking, biographical sketch and anecdotes of, ii. 326-331.
- Sublime scenery, its effects on the mind, ii. 269.
- Subterranean passage, mysterious, ii. 128.
- Sun, a universal object of adoration, i. 55; traces of the worship of in Britain, 56; idolatrous worship of by the Jews and Celtic nations, 86; human sacrifices to, 105; high festival of the sun in the spring season, why so chosen, 281.
- Sunday, a day of rest to the peasant, ii. 273.
- Superstitions, Druidical, i. 50; superstitious worship of Jews and Celts, 86; of the people of Devon, 289; case of melancholy effects of superstition, 451. Rustic superstitions, ii. 119; ancient superstitions described, 124.
- Swallows, house, i. 7.
- Swiss scenery, near Endsleigh, described, ii. 401.
- Sydenham, its register, i. 449. House, ii. 245-254; paintings at, 248; curious ancient furniture, 251; housings, 253; secret chamber, 253; Mr. Bray's recollections of Sydenham, 257.
- Tacitus, gloom of the ancient groves of oak, i. 58; notices of the superstitious rites of the ancient Germans, 87.
- Tales of the West, projected series of, i. 171.
- Tales, Old, ii. 111; an old witch, 112; Heathfield, and the young lady and the hounds, 113; of affliction, 248.
- Taliessin, called Pen-Beirdd, i. 74; magic wands of the Druids, 91; mystical water, the fountain of his inspiration, 143.
- Tamar, red deer on its banks, i. 294; birds enumerated, 300-312; the division between Cornwall and Devon, 346; broad and deep, 367. Beautiful ride to the Tamar and surrounding scenery, ii. 398.
- Tamare, Cantred of, i. 106; Tamerton, probably the ancient Tamare, 324.
- Taronuy, the god of thunder, i. 138.
- Tasker, Mr., his physiognomical prediction respecting Mr. Bray, ii. 311.
- Tavistock, climate of, i. 3; causes of its humidity, 5; proofs of its extraordinary mildness, 7; plague at, 151; its abbot called to the House of Peers by the title of Baron Hurdwick, 233; inscribed stones at Tavistock, 326; monks of Winchester who became abbots of Tavistock, 332; arms of the abbey, 335; general description of the town, its site, antiquities, &c., 345; etymology of name, 347; the vicarage, 348; abbey, by whom and when founded, 356; its present ruin, *ibid*; foundation of abbey ascribed to a dream, 383; when commenced, *ibid*; general history of abbey, its foundation, prosperity, and overthrow, 385-397, 404-440; Child of Plymstock, 387; Almer, first abbot, 392; Dunstan, 393; Algarus, *ibid*; the Augustines and Benedictines, 385, 392-396; the Walk, 405; hermitage of St. John, *ibid*; well of St. John, 406; abbey burnt by Danes, 415; portion of the boundary walls, fire-proof, only part left of the original building, *ibid*; rebuilding of the abbey,

- ibid*; benefactors of the abbey, *ibid*; remarkable persons who ended their days in the abbey, 420; number of its abbots, 423; costly attire of Dynington, *ibid*; his repairs and additions to the abbey, *ibid*; poverty of the parish priest, 424; rank and revenues of the abbot, *ibid*; dissolution of the abbey, 427; circumstances attending its dissolution, and the grant of the abbey to the Russells, 432; the vestiges of the ancient buildings, 433; havoc committed to make way for abbey house, 434; chapter house, 435; Grimbald's tower, 436; discovery of ancient bones, 437, and of the *giant's bones*, 438; refectory, 440; historic notice of the parish church, 441; curious churchwarden accounts of the 9th Richard II., 441-443; church of St. Eustace, 443; pictures in, 443-445; church accounts, 445, 449; Mr. Bray's account of Tavistock church, 450; ancient monuments, 452; Saxon school, 455; the printing press, and notice of early-printed books at Tavistock, 456. The vicarage garden, ii. 6; romantic situation of Tavistock Abbey, 8; birds and animals, 10; garden inscriptions, 13; monuments of antiquity, 15; the still-house, 16; the battlements, 16; scenery, &c., 9, 17, 25; legends about Sir Francis Drake, 29; popular legends, 115-117; ancient customs, &c., 126; Walla Brook, and Browne the poet, with specimens of his poetry, 183-206; history of Tavistock during the Great Rebellion, 208-237; disloyalty of Tavistock during this period, and its causes, 214; traditional stories, 233; premises pulled down to clear the way for the butter-market, 234; *Tavistock's Encomium*, 238; charities, 281-284; public library, 284; museum, 285; Mary Colling, 289; survey and valuation, 292; municipal government and political state, 293; number of voters under the Reform Bill, *ibid*; ancient importance, 294; markets and guildhall, *ibid*; extraordinary feud with Okehampton, 295; salubrity of Tavistock, 296; plague in 1666, 297; tales of affliction, 298; biographical notice of Mr. Bray, 303-373; Mr. Pearse on the mines near Tavistock, with anecdotes of mining, 374-381; scenery in the neighbourhood, 382; the abbots of Tavistock, from Almer down to the suppression, 416; license for the abbot to wear the pontificalia, 423.
- Tavy, river, its ancient importance, i. 14; Tavy Cleave, 21; excursion to the head of the Tavy, 242; to Tavy Cleave, 246; its source, 345; its picturesque course, 405-407. Scenery on its banks described, ii. 23, 25; scenery at the junction of the Tavy and Walkham, 384; views and scenery in the neighbourhood of Tavy Cleave, 407.
- Tea-tree, planting of one, ii. 15.
- Teeth, early decay of, among young women, ii. 124.
- Thistle, holy, rustic notions on its efficacy, ii. 125.
- Thunder-storm, horrible, at the death of Livingus, i. 420.
- Tin traffic with Phœnicians, 121.
- Tin melting, assaying and coining, i. 111; punishment for bringing bad tin to market, *ibid*; tin, an ingredient in the celebrated Tyrian dye, procured from Britain by the Phœnicians, 112.
- Tiranis, a god of the aborigines of Dartmoor, i. 36.
- Toad, curious account of, i. 278.
- Tolmen, ordeal of the, i. 105; use of in diseases, 114; figures, meaning of the word in Cornish, and account of tolmen, 225, 226; creeping under to cure diseases practised in Ireland, 226; tolmen on Over Tor, 339.
- Tooke, Horne, his character as a reasoner, ii. 342; cause of his violence against the volunteer system, *ibid*.
- Toothache, superstitious cure for, ii. 124.
- Tors of Dartmoor, probable significance of their names, in Cornish or Welsh, i. 55; enumeration of, 56; facilities afforded by, for Druidical structures, 60; appropriated as temples, *ibid*; general aspect of, 115; account of various tors and their antiquities, 196, *et seq.*; how formed, 212; import of the word *tor*, 233. Grandeur of the tors as seen from the neighbourhood of the Walkham, ii. 414.
- Tor, Royal, i. 292.
- Totila, prophecy of his death, and its fulfilment, i. 402.

- Towers of churches, why wisely constructed low, i. 270.
- Traditional laws of the ancient Greeks, i. 49.
- Transmigration of souls, Cæsar's testimony to the Druidical belief in, i. 80.
- Trap rock, why so called by the Swedes, i. 109.
- Traveller's tale, i. 27.
- Tree, attempt to discover the age of one by its circles, i. 97.
- Tremayne, Col. Arthur, "conjugal" anecdote of, ii. 250; character of the late Mr. Tremayne, 254; epitaph on a grateful parish priest, 255; origin of the arms and name of the Tremayne family, 260; monument and ancestry of the Tremaynes, 262; fidelity of Edmund, 263; story of the twin brothers, 264.
- Triads, inscriptions in, i. 78.
- Tucket, farmer, i. 113.
- Tulips, enchanted, i. 180.
- Tumuli, account of, i. 230.
- Turkish slaves, contributions for the redemption of, i. 448.
- Twin brothers, story of, ii. 264.
- Tyrian dye, British tin an ingredient in, i. 112.
- Tyrwhitt, Sir Thomas, i. 128, 292.
- Trackways on Dartmoor, i. 146.
- Valentine, St., custom at the festival of, ii. 118.
- Venus de Medici, of Mr. Desenfant's collection, ii. 334.
- Verandah, picturesque, described, ii. 12.
- Vervain, placid, used in the sacred decoction, i. 142; in Druidical sortilege, 143.
- Vestal*, loss of the, ii. 286.
- Vial, Dr., his popularity as a physician, ii. 315.
- Vintner's daughter, story of, ii. 235.
- Vipers, multiplicity of, on Dartmoor, 278.
- Virgula divinatoria, i. 76.
- Virtuous Lady, cave and mine of, ii. 384.
- Vixen Tor, basins chiselled on its summit, i. 61; visit to, 196; figure of, as seen from the Moreton road, 197; whimsical view, 199; second visit to, 204; from what its name, 227; singular form assumed by, 342. Its majestic aspect, ii. 396; its imposing grandeur near the Walkham, 398.
- Vortigern, base conduct of, i. 411.
- Wales, Prince of, tutors of, ii. 332; anecdote of his acquaintance with Mrs. Robinson, 333.
- Walk, the, under the walls of Tavistock Abbey, i. 405.
- Walkham river, head of, i. 244; modern fate of some of its rocks, 342. Sublime and picturesque appearance, ii. 384.
- Walkhampton, i. 216. Church and surrounding scenery, ii. 412.
- Walking, extraordinary instance of, i. 244.
- Walla Brook described, ii. 183; poetical tale of Walla, 200, 205; its junction with the Tavy, 389.
- Walreddon House, account of, ii. 387; surrounding scenery, *ibid.*
- Walsinton, grant of, i. 420.
- Wands, ancient magic, i. 91.
- Ward Bridge, scenery in its neighbourhood, ii. 393.
- Warewelle, i. 366; nunnery, 367-369.
- Warren, excursion to the, i. 250.
- Warton, appointment of, to the Laureateship, ii. 333.
- Watchet hangings, what, ii. 252.
- Water, use of, in sacred purposes, by the Druids, i. 142; mystical, 143.
- Waterfalls, picturesque, ii. 402.
- Waydown Tor, i. 241.
- Weales, name of, imposed on the Britons driven west of the Severn, i. 73.
- Weather rhymes, i. 5.
- Well of St. John, reflections on, i. 406.
- Wells, sacred, i. 142.
- Wessex, best governed of the Anglo-Saxons kingdoms, i. 353; date when Christianity was first propagated in, 355.
- Westlydeton lands, i. 421; appropriation of its revenues, 424.
- Wetness of the climate of Tavistock, i. 4.
- Wheatear, or English ortolan, notice of, i. 65.
- Whip-sissa, i. 176.
- Whitchurch Down, pixy perils of, i. 173.
- White-breasted bird, legend of, i. 59.
- White's *Selborne*, i. 13.
- Whiten Tor, i. 113, 114.
- Wind-fanner, or Windhover, i. 301.
- Whortleberries, delicious, of Dartmoor, i. 273.
- Wittenagemot, i. 117.
- Widdecombe church, i. 265-269; traditional legend of the appearance of the devil at, 268.

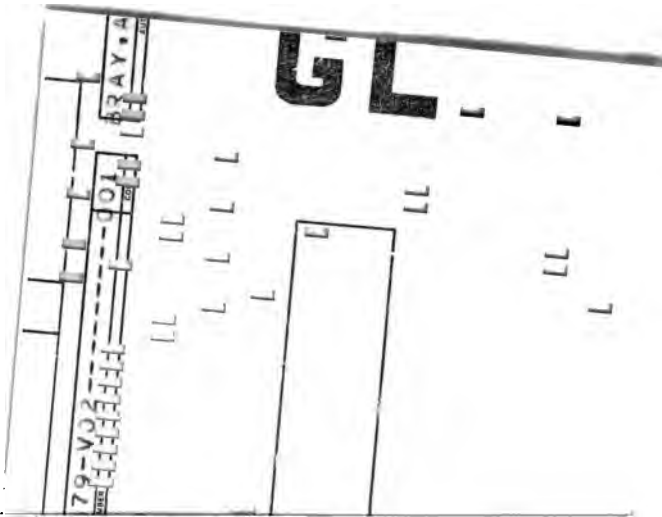


- Widow and her son, story of, ii. 299.  
 Wild flowers of Devon, i. 271-274.  
 William the Conqueror, prognostication of his invasion, i. 420.  
 Williams, Elizabeth, i. 237.  
 Winchester cathedral, by whom commenced, i. 355.  
 Wisdom of our Saxon ancestors, proof of, i. 358.  
 Wise, Sir Thomas, ii. 243; arms of, 245; pictures of his nine daughters, 248; family and descendants of, 250.  
 Wistman's, or Wiseman's Wood, Druidical antiquities of, i. 57; etymological explanation of the term, 72; inscription for a rock in, 82; general description of Wistman's Wood, 88; in the same state as at the time of the Norman Conquest, *ibid*; chorography of the wood, 89; spring at, 92; remnant of a Druid's grove, 93; sonnet to Wistman's Wood, *ibid*; legend of the old trees, 94; granite and grove of dwarf oak trees, *ibid*; nests of adders among the granite masses, 96; by whom planted, *ibid*; ancient trees, 97; silver coins, 99; the last retreat of the bards, and vestiges of them found in the wood, 100.  
 Witch, tale of an old, ii. 112.  
 Witchcraft, of Dartmoor, i. 37; case of, 244; present belief in, among the peasantry of Devonshire, ii. 29.  
 Wolcott, Dr., Peter Pindar, ii. 325.  
 Wolves in Devon, i. 34; extirpation of by firing the woods, 97; protections against, 118.  
 Wood-dove, lines on, ii. 17.  
 Woodtown, ii. 392.  
 Woods, ancient, seats of idolatrous worship, i. 86, 87, 100; selection of embowering woods as sites for abbeys, ii. 8.  
 Wren, golden-crested, ii. 11.  
 Yellow-hammer, i. 274.  
 Zig-zag ornament of churches of Norman date, by what suggested, ii. 12.









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